VISIONS OF THE KINGDOM

MRS. L. M. LANDRUM

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VISIONS OF THE KINGDOM

Visions of the Kingdom

By

Mrs. L. M. Landrum

ATLANTA, GA.
FOOTE & DAVIES CO.
1912

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DEDICATED

TO ALL

TRUE FOLLOWERS

OF OUR

LORD JESUS CHRIST

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PREFACE.

AS I sit beside my window this beautiful Monday morning, I find my heart filled with recent and bitter sorrow, and my eyes a fountain of tears; like old patient Job, I can say, "mine eyes have been dimmed by reason of sorrow, and my heart wrung by abiding grief."

Yet I do not look through this fountain of tears without light, and without hope; in the thickest darkness of these shadows I find the faith and hope of a silver lining, in the sweet promises of our blessed Master, who says, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

The beauties of nature, the green foliage of the forests, and the growing crops, all conspire to make us love and adore our Heavenly Father; but the beauties of nature and God's Providence in the protection of our bodies, is not the great aim in life. We may have all these, in abundance, and yet, our souls be starving for the bread of life. The

question will still be ringing in our ears, "Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?"

I see from my window the great throng of people, no doubt happy people, as they make their way to and from the meeting place of God's children—dear old Morrison's Camp Ground—the place where for about two score years the gospel has been preached, sinners have been saved and God's people made strong in the Lord—dear old Camp Ground—the ideal place, where the gushing springs have given their cup of water to the thousands who have rested under the shade of the trees, and slaked their thirst from these bubbling fountains.

Then, too, this place brings its sweet, sad memories. Some, at this time, will go with heavy hearts, because of the vacant chairs and the missing loved ones at the tent and under the arbor—loved ones that will never greet us more, to engage in the blessed worship of the saints below. No doubt, these dear ones are looking down from the beautiful beyond, and bidding the dear ones left behind

a God-speed in their glorious work. "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

I remember, now, a dear friend of mine, who used to seat herself by the window at her tent, being ill and not able to attend the services at the arbor, and when the trumpet would sound, she would say, "of a truth, surely this is a glimpse, a glorious foretaste of the heaven prepared for God's redeemed in the land of Beulah."

Oh, how often from this place, has the life line been thrown out to the tempest-tossed; the place where the gospel has been preached, the songs of Zion have stirred the soul, and the ladder of faith has been held for dying sinners.

But I have strayed from my first thought in writing this preface. One thing I want to say: "I know that my Redeemer liveth; I know in whom I trust, and that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, against that day."

I know that God for Christ's sake, has

pardoned my sins, and that He has promised me "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away."

There is a work for each of us to do, and do you know who was instrumental in the Master's hands in pointing the writer to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world? It was my own dear daughter, Florence, who has passed from this strife land into the beautiful life land, and the result was, we were both buried in baptism together, and made to walk in newness of life.

One thing more I want to record: I can say with the Psalmist, "In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust;" and again, "I love the Lord, because He hath heard my voice and my supplications."

If this little book shall, in any way, make somebody's path brighter, or any one's burden lighter, the praise shall be given to our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ our Redeemer, and I shall be devoutly thankful.

CHAPTER I.

The Birth of Christ.

NOW when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, to worship him."

These men came to inquire about the infant child Jesus. From the day that Jesus was born, until this old world shall be destroyed by fire, there will be wise men inquiring about the blessed Son of God. Inquiring about His wisdom and righteousness, and His power to save men and women from their sins; inquiring of this one Mediator between God and man; the one Being that can reconcile lost sinners to God, the Father. If men and women will be diligent in their inquiries, they will find what the Prophet saw in his vision when he said, "Traveling in the greatness of his strength; I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save."

They will find, also, what was said of the Christ wherever He went—"Never man spake like this man," and again, "Thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him."

From the day of Christ's birth in the stable, until His death upon the rugged cross, cruel hands sought to slay Him and to cast out His name as evil. Even when He had to be carried as a helpless babe, did Herod seek to slay Him.

When these wise men started out on their search to find the child, they were eager to find Him that they might worship and honor Him. But when these men inquired about the young child, Herod was troubled, and he also inquired of the Chief Priests where Christ should be born. After they had gotten their information, they continued their search, Herod giving them this message: "When ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also." But the hypocrisy of Herod was very clearly mani-

fested, for he had no intention of worshiping the infant child Jesus.

When these men left Herod, the star which they saw in the East, went before them till it came and stood over where the young child was. We see many beautiful stars in the East, West, North and South, and I often speak of their beauty and brightness, but this Star, the Star of Bethlehem outshines them all, and is the Star that lighteth all men that cometh into the world.

After they had found Jesus they did not go back to Herod and tell him all they saw and felt; God warned them that they should return to their homes another way.

When they were departed, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt." The angel did not say to stay a week, a month or a year, no specified time, but said, "Be thou there until I bring thee word; for Herod will seek the young child to destroy Him." Does this look like Herod wanted to worship the child Jesus? No, he wanted to destroy Him because he was

jealous of the coming kingdom of the Christ.

If we worship God in spirit and in truth, it is because we love Him, He is precious in our sight, and we don't want to destroy anything that is dear to us.

Joseph obeyed the Lord and went to Egypt. So you and I should obey every message God brings us; we should tell what He has done for us, and what He promises to do for us; hesitate not to declare the whole counsel of God.

"Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men." Was not this an awful time for the little ones?

In Bethlehem of Judaea,
  On that happy Christmas day,
Jesus, the Son of God was born,
  To take our sins and fears away.

The star in the east, so brilliant,
  Was a light to the men on their way.
It led them to where the young child was—
  That gave to us the first Christmas day.

These wise men were guided,
  To the humble little stall,
And in the manger lay the babe,
  The Saviour of us all.

Think of the blessed Son of God,
  An infant pure and white;
Think of a treacherous tyrant,
  Seeking to take His life.

But an angel of our Lord,
  On wings of love appeared;
And softly from his pinions,
  A warning came to those who feared.

Remove the child to Egypt,
  God's winged messenger cried;
Be there until I bring thee word
  For Herod seeks His life.

We have no account as to whether or not the way seemed long to those men who were searching for the babe, or whether or not they had any conveyance or easy way by which to reach Bethlehem, but we do have an account of their great rejoicing when they found the

child. Let me say that there was never a soul that has found Jesus in the free pardon of sin, but that there has been great rejoicing. When Jesus was born into this world there was cause for rejoicing; and when a soul is born into the kingdom of God, we rejoice with exceeding great joy.

> Rejoice, I say rejoice,
> When a hard fought battle's won;
> The battle for life beyond the grave,
> When our labors here are done.

CHAPTER II.

Judas Betrays the Christ.

While Peter and John prepared the feast
  Upon that awful solemn day,
The priests and scribes sought a plan
  To take Christ's life away.

Satan entered into Judas,
  He, who was of the twelve;
And many are the souls to-day
  Satan would land in hell.

The chief priests and captains,
  Gave him money to betray
The loving Saviour to them,
  On that awful, trying day.

When the passover was ready,
  And when the hour was near;
Think of this glorious supper,
  With Christ to give good cheer.

Behold His words and loving face,
  As He blessed the bread and wine,
And for all He had a place,
  A place so sacred and so divine.

By that table sat the enemy,
  Ready to take human life,
With the money in his pocket,
  And his heart beating wild with strife.

But the Saviour for him had prayed,
  And often does for you.
In meditation low and sweet,
  He calls to you "be true."

On the lonely mount of Olives,
  He asked His disciples to pray;
For well He knew that Judas
  Would betray Him on that day.

How dark the hour in the garden,
  When His sweat was like drops of blood—
But an angel from heaven strengthened Him,
  And calmed the raging flood.

How sad to see the traitor now,
  See him daring, as he gave the kiss,
He takes no heed of the Saviour's brow,
  And no care for heaven's bliss.

The mob that came to do the deed,
  And take the life of the Son of man,
Had no pity for hearts that bleed,
  As they led the midnight clan.

Can you see them mocking Jesus,
  Blindfolded like a child?
Can you feel the blows they gave Him,
  And hear them tell Him, "Prophesy?"

They led Him into their council
  And asked, "Art thou the Christ?"
In gentle tones, so loving,
  He spoke of their unbelief and strife.

CHAPTER III.

Christ Delivered to be Crucified.

AND the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate, and they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying that he himself is Christ a King."

Then Pilate began to question Him, saying, "Art thou the King of the Jews?" But Jesus did not answer him, as we sometimes do, even when we know of a truth that we are on the right side of a question; but simply said, "Thou sayest it." I believe Pilate thought at that very moment that the man who stood before him was not only the king of the Jews, but that He was King of kings and Lord of lords; but he did not want to confess it. Confession is the great barrier that keeps men and women out of heaven. We know that Jesus Christ is the one being, who has touched this earth, that has no equal; yet we do not want

to confess Him before men; and He says, "Whosoever, therefore, shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." Nothing so pleases our blessed Master as for men and women to confess Him in their hearts and before the world.

Then, after Pilate looked into the face of Him that had been among them, seeking by precept and example to lead them to life eternal, and after he had examined Him three times, under the most trying circumstances, he said, "I find no fault in him." Jesus Christ wrung from this mock trial one of the greatest victories of earth, when Pilate made this confession; yet it was no more than must be wrung from the heart of every man, when the end shall come—"no fault in him," must be the victory which will be proclaimed in the day of judgment.

It seemed that Pilate's words had no power over the people; but with fierce words they said, "Let him be crucified."

Do you wonder that we are often persecuted for doing good unto men, and being loyal to the gospel? But when we are persecuted for righteousness' sake, the blessed promise is, we shall inherit the kingdom of heaven.

Notice, also, that Pilate said he had sent the Saviour to Herod, and nothing worthy of death was done by Him—he proposed to chastise Him and let Him go.

But Pilate's promise to chastise Him and let Him go did not satisfy the people; and they cried out again, "Let him be crucified." I have heard of disobedient children doing things they should not, and a chastisement from a parent was sufficient, but not so in this case; nothing but the blood of Jesus would satisfy the clamor of the people at that time.

Pilate had the power to release Jesus, had he been willing to do so, regardless of their cries to crucify Him. Pilate said unto them the third time, "Why, what evil hath He done? I have found no cause of death in Him."

But they had fully made up their minds that they would not have Christ to reign over

them, and we are told in the Word, that the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed, and He was led away to be crucified.

I fancy I can see Jesus as they led Him away, and bade one Simon to bear His cross; as much as to say, take this cross that will soon bear the marks of His guilt, and follow after Him.

We are told that a great company of people, both men and women, followed after Him; but they did so of their own accord, they loved Jesus, and they bewailed and lamented Him; for when we see those we love in the power of the enemy, it is natural for us to bow our heads in sorrow, as did this company of people.

But listen to the words of Jesus: "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children."

There were also two malefactors, one on either side, that were crucified with Him. One died rejecting Christ, the other took the last chance and was saved through faith in the

blood of Christ before it was shed on the cross. It was in this moment that He said to this dying thief: "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Then turning to those who spilled His blood, He said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

Let us follow Christ's example; and when we are persecuted and our names are cast out as evil, let us say in meekness, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Let us shower the roses and garlands along their pathway. How shall we do this? By speaking kind words to them, and relieving their wants when they are in trouble, and last, but not least, when we bow our heads in solemn prayer we can say, "Father, forgive them."

We are told that they parted His raiment, and the soldiers mocked Him and said, "If thou be the King of the Jews, save thyself."

They led Him unto Pilate,
The enemy accused Him there;
Said He perverted the nation's power,
And called himself the Christ.

Behold our loving Saviour,
  Standing firm for the right;
And before this man Pilate,
  He was ready for the fight.

He knew the Father willed it,
  His life to give for all,
And in humble submission,
  He stood ready for the call.

When the blessed Christ was questioned
  By Pilate and King Herod, too,
The people mocked and scourged Him,
  Yet unto all, He still was true.

Behold Him wearing the gorgeous robe,
  And Pilate pleading for His release;
Behold in His side, the deadly probe,
  As He seeks the sinner's only peace.

No fault, cries the double-minded man,
  No case have I 'gainst this godly Son.
Three times He comes unto this evil clan,
  And come to say His work is well done.

But in thunder tones, their voices
  Rang out upon the evening air,
Crucify Him, crucify Him now—
  This Son of God, and Son of man so fair.

With maddening hearts, they led Him away,
  And upon Simon they placed His cross;
Sad mourners followed this star of day,
  Feeling keenly their heavy loss.

The earth and the sun refused their light,
And darkness covered that holy ground.
The hour had come, He'd whipped the fight,
In the blood of this sacred wound.

Many stood with streaming eyes,
Amazed at what the court had done;
But in that hour of maddening cries,
The Lamb of God His victory won.

CHAPTER IV.

The Resurrection of Christ.

VERY early in the morning, the first day of the week, three women came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun, bringing sweet spices to anoint the body of Christ. These women were considering among themselves as to who would roll away the stone from the door of the sepulchre, for it was very great. But when they looked, they saw that the stone was already rolled away and they were affrighted; but an angel said unto them, "be not affrighted; ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified; He is risen; He is not here; behold the place where they laid Him."

This thrilling story fills my whole being with sympathy when I read this blessed truth, how, from infancy to manhood, our Lord who bore our sins in His body and loved us with an everlasting love, was chased from place to place, by cruel men; was clothed in purple and

wore a crown of thorns, was mocked and in derision could pray "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

From infancy to manhood,
The enemy so full of strife,
Chased our Lord to Calvary,
And took His own dear life.

For what was Jesus chased?
For what was Jesus scorned?
Because He loved His people so,
He wore the crown of thorns.

He gave His life a ransom,
He freely died, once for all;
In the tomb calm sleep He slept,
And on the third day arose.

When the women were at the sepulchre,
Where the blessed Lord had lain,
They sought to find the One who saved
All mankind from sin and pain.

But the stone which made the door,
That shut the blessed Saviour in,
Had been rolled away in wondrous power,
And cleared the way from death and sin.

His triumph over the darkened grave,
Gave to the world its needed power;
He came our ransomed souls to save,
And brighten our way in darkest hours.

The women who came to the sepulchre were Mary Magdalene, out of whom Jesus had cast seven devils, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome. No wonder Mary Magdalene came in that trying hour; her faith had been put on trial, but she had the glorious light of triumph. She lived to see the blessed Son of God, whom she had trusted and believed in, rise from the grave, as He had told them He would. She beheld the enemy's defeat, the Roman seal broken, the men who guarded the grave helpless as babes, and the Christ, who seemed helpless, walk forth a conqueror.

Oh, the anxiety these good women had, as they made their way to that lonely spot where one they loved had lain. No doubt they went with bowed heads and tearful eyes, meditating over the past and anxious about the future. They knew the shepherd had been slain, and the sheep scattered abroad. The great problem that confronted these good women was, who would roll away the stone from the door of the sepulchre—and let's ask ourselves the question:

Who can roll away the stone,
From the heart all steeped in sin?
Jesus can roll away that stone,
And make us pure within.

His love and grace is all sufficient,
His love and pity is so free;
He suffered and died upon the cross,
And He died for you and me.

This same Jesus, that Mary came to anoint, will come into our souls and into our lives, and apply the healing balm, that makes us whiter than snow, if we will only open the door of our hearts. He is anxiously waiting to roll away the sin of unbelief from our hearts, and He will walk by our side through adversity as well as prosperity. How comforting the thought to know we have a friend, who will walk with us in adversity. When everything runs smoothly with us and the road to prosperity seems open to us, it is hard to fully realize the worth of a true friend; but when misfortune frowns upon us, it is then we look to others for help. Our blessed Saviour has not only promised to help us in adversity, but has said that He will come in

and abide with us, if we will only believe in Him and trust Him for life and salvation.

When the angel declared the resurrection of Christ to the women that had come to the sepulchre, he also said: "Go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him, as he said unto you."

To whom did Jesus appear just after His resurrection? It was to Mary Magdalene, and she went and told them she had been with Him, as they mourned and wept; but they would not believe her. After that He appeared in another form, unto two of His disciples, as they went on a journey to Emmaus. What a wonderful revelation He made unto these two disciples, as their eyes were holden, so they did not recognize the Christ. He made their hearts to burn, while He talked to them about the things that had just happened in Jerusalem. He also opened to them the scriptures and rehearsed with them the things the Prophets had said concerning Himself.

He then appeared unto the eleven, as they

sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart.

He also gave unto the apostles the great commission to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

We can not all preach as the apostles were commanded to do, but there is a work for all to do.

I sometimes wonder why any soul redeemed by the blood of Christ should hesitate to send the gospel into all the world. Let us open up our hearts, and send the blessed light to earth's remotest bounds.

After Jesus had given His apostles His valedictory address, He was received up into heaven, to become our Mediator between us and God—our Prophet, Priest and King.

CHAPTER V.

Christ the Great Physician.

WHEN Jesus had entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into His own city, they brought to Him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed; and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick man: "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee." They did not tell Jesus that they had faith in Him, but He understood their hearts and He saw their actions. So it is with us now; He understands all our thoughts, and rewards us according to our faith in Him.

As the Christ healed this man of his infirmity, just so is He able and willing to heal every sin-sick soul in this world. If we exercise a living faith in His power to remit sin, and trust Him for all, He will wash us in the blood of the Lamb and put a new song in our mouths, even praises unto God.

If our loved ones were sick and a physician had to be called, and should cure them of

their disease, no matter what it might be, could we find fault in the physician? But these scribes, that criticised the Son of God, had evil in their hearts; and Jesus knowing their thoughts said, "Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?" Jesus wanted to make everything plain to them; He wanted them to know and understand, if the man was ever healed, it must be by faith, and He said, "Whether is easier, to say, thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, arise and walk?" The Christ wanted them to know that the Son of man had power on earth to forgive sins; therefore He said to the sick man, "Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house." This man obeyed the command of Christ, because he had been made whole, and could now return to his home.

After this man had been cured of his sickness, no doubt he had a great desire to help some one to the Great Physician, so they, too, might be cured; and I think that all men who have had their souls made new in Christ, want to bring some sin-sick soul to Jesus, that they may be saved from their sins and made new creatures in Christ Jesus.

Notice in this beautiful lesson, when the multitude saw what was done, they glorified God, because of such power which had been given unto the Son of man—the Great Physician of the souls and bodies of men and women in this world.

When I think of the old time power and the many wonderful things performed thereby, I find myself pleading for that power to be sent upon us just now, that we may have the baptism of the Holy Spirit, to make the preaching more effective, dead churches be revived, and a higher standard of consecration among individual Christians in all our churches and in our homes.

After Jesus healed the man that was sick, and as He sat at meat in the house, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples. But this displeased the Pharisees and they began to question His disciples, saying, "Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?"

When Jesus heard the Pharisees, as they questioned the disciples, He did not offer any apology for having eaten with them, but He

said, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." And He further said, "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

So Jesus is to-day following this same calling—He is the Great Physician of souls, who is able and willing to save all that will come to God by Him. We sometimes grope in darkness, with no ray of light to mark our way; but then in the most hopeless hour, we hear the sweet whisper of light and love, in the full assurance of faith, that the Redeemer has power on earth to forgive sin.

Let me repeat again the words of the Master: "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." And again He says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." And if the sinner will open the door, Jesus will come in and abide. He will not say I will save you to-morrow, or at some future time, but will save you now.

Though the stains of sin are on your soul,
He bids you come, and be made whole.

CHAPTER VI.

Elijah Fed By the Ravens.

THINK of a man being so consecrated to God that he was willing to go, willing to stay, willing to hinder the rain and even the dew from heaven; willing to hide himself and be fed by the fowls of the air. And for what? Was it to please some friend, that the ties of many years had bound them closely to each other, or was it because his father and mother had over-persuaded him, that he might become famous? I say nay. It was to do God's will, do as he was bidden to do; and what is more, do it willingly.

Elijah was a man of God and we see, by many infallible proofs, that he was richly rewarded for his goodness. The rain ceased falling at his command, and though he was hid from the eyes of man, the all-seeing eye of God the Father saw him and He did as He had promised; for we notice the ravens

brought him bread and flesh morning and evening, and he drank of the brook Cherith.

The Lord had directed Elijah to hide himself by this brook—there he could feast upon its waters; and the word of the Lord came to Elijah on this wise: After He directed him where to hide himself, He said, "I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there."

Is not our Lord a wonderful and all-powerful Lord? The winds and the waves obey Him, even the birds of the air obey Him. Can we not obey Him, too? Let us hide ourselves, not by the brook Cherith, but hide ourselves behind the cross, and know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

Do I hear someone say, "How can I hide myself behind the cross?" I answer, study dear Old Elijah's travels in life and understand how many oppositions he had, but they did not daunt him; he followed close beside the Lord and did whatever He commanded him to do. And if we will do His will and obey Him in all things, we, like Elijah, will see His glory, and be made to drink of the fountain of life and salvation.

The word of God does not tell us just how long Elijah stayed by the brook Cherith, but it does tell us after awhile the brook dried up because there was no rain in the land.

Then again, the word of the Lord came unto Elijah, and where did He direct him to go, and who did He command to feed him? He did not tell him to go to some large hotel, or to some very wealthy man, that he might eat and drink and be merry, but He said, "Get thee to Zarephath and dwell there; behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee." And Elijah obeyed.

Sometimes I try to picture in my mind this grand man, when he was leaving this little brook, where the faithful ravens had fed him, where he had been hid from the eyes of the world, and where each day he basked in the sunshine of God's love and mercy. The efforts of a skilled artist, to paint this picture, would be in vain. But when we have given up all for the Kingdom of heaven, when we take no thought for the morrow, when we feel His cleansing power, and have His spirit

bearing witness with our spirits, that we are His children, it is then that we can understand the Elijah of old, this grand man of God.

When Elijah reached Zarephath and came to the gate of the city, the widow woman, that God had commanded to care for him, was there gathering sticks; and Elijah called to her and asked for a little water in a vessel. We have no account of how many miles this man had traveled, or how he traveled; but I am sure it was a very disagreeable journey. There had been no rain and the brooks and springs were dried up; therefore, he was very thirsty, and we also learn he was hungry, too, for he added, "Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand." But the rains having been cut off, and possibly for many other reasons, provisions were scarce and the poor woman replied, "As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse." And said she, "I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die."

Now comes the glad, good news from the lips of Elijah. Though this woman had no bread in her house, Elijah said, "Fear not." As much as to say, trust God, take Him at His word, for thus saith the Lord God of Israel, "The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth."

I fancy I can see this dear woman's countenance light up and a radiant smile flash over her pale face as she listened attentively to the words, as they fell from the lips of this stranger that was to dwell with this little family in their home of poverty.

Many days did they eat together, and the barrel of meal wasted not, nor did the cruse of oil fail. Why? Because God had said it should not fail. The message was delivered through Elijah, God's servant, but it was God, alone, that gave the increase.

It was like feeding so many hungry people with but five loaves and two fishes. Though the meal and the oil was low, it served this little family with plenty, because God was

able, as it was reduced, to increase it again. He was able to provide flesh and bread for the ravens to feed Elijah, and He was also able and willing to provide food for this poor widow woman to feed him.

We notice further on, though this little family had for many days lived peacefully and quietly in their humble home in Zarephath, but after a while sorrow came to this home, and do you call to mind what soon happened to it? This sorrow brings to my mind these words: "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth." The chastening hand of sickness and death had now fallen upon this blessed home. The widow's son had become violently ill and died; and that mother, like many others, was almost frantic with grief.

When the breath had gone out of this dear boy, the mother came to Elijah and asked if he had come to call her sin to remembrance, and to slay her son.

Now, from what I can gather from the reading of God's word, Elijah was as calm and serene as if nothing had happened in this little home and he said to the mother, "Give

me thy son." Do you suppose this mother gave her dear boy to Elijah willingly, or do you think she began to make excuses, as some did in the days of old, when they were bidden to the feast? And like you and I sometimes do, when the Lord calls us, in that sweet and gentle tone of voice, to active service in His vineyard? No, I don't believe she made any excuse whatever, although the scriptures do not tell us; but I believe she willingly allowed Elijah to take her boy from her, dear as he was to her, and much as she liked to be with him and enjoy his loving company, and do with him as he thought best to do.

After Elijah had taken this boy to himself and had carried him up in a loft, where he abode, and had laid him upon his own bed and had cried unto God for help in this awful hour, what was the result? The Lord heard him and granted his request, and the soul of the child came into him again and he received him alive from the dead. Is not this a beautiful picture to look upon?

When Elijah came down out of the chamber and delivered this dear boy to the heart-

broken mother, and spoke the words "Thy son liveth," do you wonder that she said to him, "By this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth."

I rejoice to-day in the glorious triumph of the victory gained for that boy and that mother.

Be followers of Christ, dear children,
And walk in the path of right.
The God of hosts will sustain us,
While walking in the light.

O'er rugged paths we may be led,
Yet He will give us light;
And by and by, like Elijah of old,
We are sure to win the fight.

CHAPTER VII.

The Israelites Repent at Mizpeh.

IS it not as probable to-day, for us to be instrumental in the Master's hands, if we are His children, in saving souls, in lifting up the fallen and in pointing someone to Christ, as it was in the days of Samuel, and of Paul and Peter? I am sure it is, if we consecrate ourselves to the service of our Master. I say it is, if we will allow the Christ to lead us and guide us, for He has said in His word, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove." We are also told that nothing shall be impossible unto us, if we have faith. We can do nothing acceptable unto God, without faith. When we have a faith that will lay hold on the promises of God, we can do all things. A faith that works by love, purifies the heart and over-

comes the world, will enable God's children to win souls to Christ, under all circumstances in life.

We sometimes hear people say, "O well, I suppose such a thing is possible, hardly probable." Is it not written in God's word that the Israelites, by Samuel's means, solemnly repented? And do you believe that Samuel could do more than you or I, if we would be willing to be led by the spirit of Christ? I think not. If we would only look to Jesus to help us in all things, in place of trying to do God's will in our own strength, we would be surprised at the blessings we would receive, and at the influence we might exert in this world, if we were exercising the right kind of faith in God.

We are assured that the work we do in our everyday life is the key that unlocks the door to success or failure; and if we are ever the means of anyone repenting of their sins, it will surely be through our daily walk and conversation. To be a Christian on the Sabbath day only, I must say is impossible. We may serve Satan all the week, and serve God

only on the Sabbath, and our Christian influence will be a failure. We will never be the means of anyone repenting, for repentance comes by faith and prayer—prayer that will take no denial; which brings to mind that old gospel song:

"I would not be denied,
I would not be denied,
'Till Jesus came and made me whole,
I would not be denied."

We must pray earnestly, leaving off the things of the world, its profits and its pleasures.

Jesus is always ready—He is in the attitude to hear and answer prayer and to forgive sins, at any and all times. But we poor weak creatures sometimes have to offer prayer after prayer to get our hearts in condition to receive a blessing.

To illustrate: Take the most productive farm in all the land, run the furrows, plant your crops without preparing the land, and what will be the result, as a return from the land, though it be ever so fertile? The crops will be a failure. Just so with professed

Christianity of the present day. If we expect our children, and our neighbor's children to repent of their sins, we must ask the question: Is my heart right with God? Is my soul wearing the garment of righteousness?

God never intended us to receive a blessing without asking for it, for He has said, "Ask and ye shall receive;" and if we ask in faith, we shall receive.

When we get our hearts right with God, we may expect to see others get right, and souls will be saved, for if this world is ever reformed, it will be through the love and mercy of God and the untiring efforts of His believing children. We should listen while God says, in thunder tones, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."

We notice in every chapter of the Book of all books so much victory for the righteous and the destruction of the ungodly and we know of a truth if we do not repent of our sins, we will be banished from the presence

of the Lord forever, and that without remedy.

You remember when God called Samuel and revealed to him the destruction of Eli's house, He said, "In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house."

And he further said, "When I begin, I will also make an end, for I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knoweth." Why? Because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.

And has not God, in His own wisdom and in His own way, threatened vengeance, or promised life everlasting, upon the people of to-day, just as He did upon the people of old, and will He not judge you and I in that day? Will He not perform either for or against us in that great day, and has He not warned us as He did Eli?

Yes, He has left for us an example, His own word, and has put it into the hearts of many consecrated men and women to warn

us of our danger, unless we repent and believe the gospel.

We notice the Lord said that the iniquity of Eli's house should not be purged with sacrifice nor offering forever; and this makes it plain to my mind that God will punish the wicked though He bear long with them.

Some one may say, "I do not believe that God would create me and then hurl me into a burning hell. He is too kind and loving." So He is kind and loving, but He has said in His word, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

Is not the life and death of Eli a warning to us, as Christians, and as fathers and mothers, to walk in the straight and narrow way, and that we lay examples worth our children's notice?

Stand up, stand up for Jesus,
Though temptations press us sore;
He has promised to be with us,
'Till we reach the Golden Shore.

CHAPTER VIII.

Jesus in Bethany.

WHEN Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, there occurred an incident that became a great historic fact in the life of Jesus, which still is a living symbol of the precious doctrines of the New Testament.

There came unto Him a woman, having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on His head as he sat at meat, For all we know, this ointment was very expensive, for the disciples said, "This ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor."

I can almost see her astonishment as she heard the words that censured her in this act. She did not consider the expense of the ointment; she had but one thought, and that was that she might honor and glorify the Son of God. She wanted to give Him the best of all; she had already given her heart to the

Lord and she wanted to show to Him and to the world her willingness to give Him the best for service.

When Jesus heard the murmurings of the disciples, He said, "Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me; for ye have the poor always with you, but me ye have not always." Jesus was to go away, in a little while, and she performed this sacred act to anoint Him for burial. In this act, this woman published to the world her high appreciation of Him as the Saviour of the world; her devotion to and her belief in a risen Saviour. She has also taught in this act the great lesson of the mammon of unrighteousness—the lesson of the deceitfulness of riches.

What are riches? In a moment, they can take wings and fly away; fire can consume them; the floods can sweep them away forever and our money be as the vapor of the morning.

But this woman has taught by this act of hers that we should, beyond the value and glory of riches, look to that inheritance that

is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

She has taught the lesson to lay not up treasures on earth, but to lay up treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.

She heeded the lesson taught by our Master when He said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

The lesson, taught by this woman, is to go down in history, like the woman who gave her all into the treasury of the Lord—it shall be told as a memorial of her faith and fidelity to her blessed Lord and Master.

This woman anointed the body
Of Jesus, who died on the cross.
But the disciples talked complainingly
Of this, her apparent loss.

The loss of this precious ointment,
That was poured upon His head,
Seemed to cause great discontentment,
'Mongst the disciples that Jesus led.

CHAPTER IX.

Belshazzar's Feast.

BELSHAZZAR the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords and drank wine before the thousand. This king was a very wicked man, and many things he did were sacrilegious. He did not reverence God.

Belshazzar had a fine opportunity to guide the people aright, if his heart had been right with God.

It seems that he wanted the guests at this great feast served in the very best style, for when he had tasted the wine, he commanded that the golden and silver vessels be brought, which his father had taken out of the Temple of God in Jerusalem, and they drank and made merry and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone. Six gods did they praise; but remember the words of the Master, "Thou shalt

worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."

I am so glad that the plan of salvation is such that we have only to bow to the one Mediator, one Lord, and there is but one door to unlock to give admittance into the kingdom of heaven.

While they were praising these gods of gold and silver, a man's hand appeared upon the wall of the king's palace. This seemed to trouble the king very much and he at once cried with a loud voice for relief; but be it remembered that he did not look to the wise One in this hour of trouble. He did not call upon the Good Shepherd who had the power to rescue him, but he cried with a loud voice for the astrologers and the soothsayers to be brought in—those as helpless as himself; and he made the promise, if any one could read the writing, and show him the interpretation thereof, they should be clothed with scarlet, have a chain of gold about their neck, and should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

But they were all at a loss to know what to do. Many would have been glad to have

come into possession of the gold chain and of the scarlet robe, to say nothing of being a ruler in the kingdom; but their eyes were dim and they could not understand the handwriting on the wall. Even the wise men came in, but could not read it, nor give any satisfactory information to the troubled king.

Is not this feast very much like the feasts of our day? When we gather our friends together by cordial invitation, we fail to invite that loving Shepherd that holds our souls in life, and suffereth not our feet to stray.

We notice the queen came into the banquet house and said, "O king, live forever; let not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed."

And she further said, "There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; now let Daniel be called, and he will shew the interpretation."

While Daniel was represented as having in him the spirit of the gods, which means the

worship of idols, it is also true that there is no place in Daniel's life where he worshiped any being but the true and living God. No doubt this false idea of his worship was given him, erroneously, by the men who first saw his skill in interpretation when Nebuchadnezzar called him to interpret his dream. Daniel was a true worshiper of the God of heaven, without a doubt.

The king changed Daniel's name to Belteshazzar, but the queen did not call him by that name; she said, "Let Daniel be called, and he will shew the interpretation." She did not say perhaps he can, but she said, "He will shew the interpretation."

We are told that the king promised Daniel gifts, if he would read the writing and make known to him the interpretation thereof; but I believe those promises to Daniel were about the same that Satan made to our blessed Lord, when he showed him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them. These promises were nothing in the sight of our Lord; neither did Daniel consider the gifts anything, for he said, "Give thy rewards to an-

other; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation."

Belshazzar did not acknowledge Daniel's God, yet this did not prevent Daniel from giving him light on this great problem that confronted him, and I believe he did it gladly. Every Christian knows how willingly he or she would render service, without money and without price, to help a poor lost sinner find the Saviour.

What a monument did Daniel erect to the glory of God, when he confessed, by his actions, that he cared not for silver or gold, nor the gods of this earth. He was like Peter when he said, "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee."

I would rather be a child of the king than to receive all the treasures of earth. Give me the love of God in the soul, rather than the kingdoms of this world.

Daniel was thoroughly acquainted with the history of the kings; and told how God had led them and blessed them, until they turned their backs on God and worshiped idols.

Let us notice the result of Belshazzar's wickedness. The same night in which the decree went forth, that said, "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting," he lost his power and lost his life.

I sometimes think this wicked king heard the sentence without a murmur. He knew he had trampled the mercies of God under his feet, and, therefore, the punishment was just and right.

This wonderful record of transgression ought to be a solemn warning to all men who are disregarding the God of Daniel. This lesson also teaches the true reward that is sure to come to all who live godly lives and trust in the promises of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER X.

The Queen of Sheba and Solomon.

ACCORDING to the teachings of God's word, King Solomon exceeded all men of earth in riches and wisdom, and his fame went out over the whole earth.

The Queen of Sheba had heard great things concerning the wisdom of Solomon, but she could not get her consent to believe it. Still this was perfectly natural; for we utter the same kind of words, time and again, about things that are true. But by and by she decided in her own mind to go and see Solomon for herself. So she went down in great pomp to see if she could put to naught some of his boasted wisdom and extensive understanding. She applied question after question to see if she could confuse or put to shame his reputed wisdom. But after thorough trial, she gave up the fight, and said, "It was a true report that I heard in mine

own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom," and she continued, "The half was not told me; thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard."

And speaking from my own personal experience, the wisdom of God revealed in the personal work of Christ, has never been told. Whenever and wherever he has spoken, it can be truthfully said, "Never man spake like this man." Never such wisdom, never such power, and never such love and grace given to the world before his coming. And like the Queen of Sheba said in another place in reference to Solomon, "Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom." So say I, happy are they who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Happy are they who have learned from Jesus Christ, as Prophet, Priest and King; who have obeyed His words and been led by His spirit. Happy are they who have realized what Paul meant when he said, "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ

Jesus my Lord." And to comprehend what Paul said in another place, when he declares, "He is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

To comprehend Christ's wisdom, is to understand His power; power to save the souls of men and women lost in sin; power to raise the dead and bring them back to life again; power to reconcile all men unto God the Father, and remit their sins, forevermore, by virtue of His atonement for sin.

When we think of God's promise to us concerning our heavenly home, our house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, our souls are made to leap for joy, unutterable.

I remember my anxiety for my dear son's return, some time ago, who had been gone from the home fireside for a period of three years. By and by a letter came; it read like this: "I am sick, will be home as soon as I am able to go." This letter was like a spring, sending forth bitter and sweet water at the same time. "I am sick," was the bitter, but "coming home," was the sweet. The home-coming is the sweet intelligence that stirs our

hearts and makes us cry aloud for joy. Yes, they will be here soon, the long expected and the often prayed for, is to be here on that day. The dear ones are coming home to be our guests once again, and that is enough for all the inmates of the house. But why this stir, this joyous preparation? Because this is his or her home—dear sweet home; no place like it on earth; sweet and precious figure of the mansions above, our heavenly home.

After the death of King Solomon, his son, Rehoboam, reigned in his stead. Sometimes we are promoted from one position to another, and we are not very well fitted for the work we are called to do; and I believe it was so in this case of Rehoboam. He was greatly flattered, and the people said "Thy father made our yoke grievous; now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee."

Sometimes Satan whispers in our ears, "I'll make your yoke lighter, if you will serve me."

So we listen, and as we listen, our hearts are deceived, we are led astray—then the bitter cup follows.

Rehoboam yielded to the temptation, disgraced his father's throne, and went to the bad, as a result.

So far as we can see, this man did just as thousands are doing to-day. He did not take God into his confidence, or regard His will. He did not heed the counsel of the aged men, but consulted with the young men, and thereby was unwisely advised.

After a while God raised up a man to deliver His message unto Rehoboam, and the remnant of the people. This man said to Rehoboam, "Thus saith the Lord, ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren, the children of Israel; return every man to his house, for this thing is from me." In this message the Lord gave His way-bill to Israel. So God now gives us our way-bill from earth to heaven, and says, return to thine own house.

Who reigns on earth and in heaven?
  Who guides our feet aright?
It is Jesus that reigns on earth and in heaven;
  It is He that gives us light.

He steers our little bark,
  O'er many a stormy wave;
'Tis He that speaks the word of peace,
  'Tis He our souls can save.

CHAPTER XI.

Adonijah Seeks the Kingdom.

IN the previous chapter, we have studied the reign of some of the kings, and the results. Now, for a little while we will study a different character, Adonijah.

This man was not willing that David's wishes be carried out in the selection of a king; but he exalted himself, saying, "I will be king."

But he was like the man or woman who tries to get into the kingdom of heaven by devising his own plans, rather than those of our Lord.

Nathan the prophet said to Bathsheba, the mother of Solomon, "Hast thou not heard that Adonijah doth reign, and David our Lord knoweth it not?"

He further said, "Come, let me, I pray thee, give thee counsel, that thou mayest save

thine own life, and the life of thy son Solomon."

Now let us consider who is worthy for us to counsel with; and not only worthy, but one who is willing to lead us in the paths of right. I can point you to none other than our blessed Lord. Remember His words, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him and he with me."

Sometimes we hear people say, "I am willing to forgive my brother of his wrong, if he will only come and ask me. I am willing to meet him on half-way ground."

And if we are at enmity with God, let's make the start, and Jesus will meet us on half-way ground, and the difficulty will be settled between us and God our Father, once for all time. Then we will not be looked upon as offenders, for we know who is King; and we will not have to tell the people who reigns in our hearts, or who sits upon the throne. Our actions will tell the story, and

our conduct will show to the world that we are a child of the King.

Did the voices of the people prevail who said, "God save King Adonijah?" No, because King David swore unto Bathsheba and said, "As the Lord liveth, that hath redeemed my soul out of all distress, even as I sware unto thee by the Lord God of Israel, saying, assuredly, Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead."

Therefore Adonijah was cut off; and as sure as Adonijah was cut off from the kingdom, just so sure will the unbeliever be cut off from the kingdom of heaven; for God rules the heavens and the earth, and all that is therein. He has said, in His word, "except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

Are there not thousands of people standing in the byways and hedges, and on the highways pleading, God save this man or this woman, and great is the rejoicing of the multitude, as well as the angels in heaven, when sinners are saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation?

When we shall appear before Christ on His judgment seat, and we hear the words, "Come, ye blessed of my Father," our joy will be such as we have never experienced in all our lives. But then comes the sad feature of the case; when those who have gone from bad to worse, unmindful of every opportunity to do good in the world, hear the words, "Depart, I never knew you," then will fear come upon all who obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Do we stop to think that we will all be assigned to a home some sweet day? To a beautiful mansion God has prepared for those who love and serve him.

Assigned to a home, how sweet the thought,
To a home that Jesus' blood has bought.

CHAPTER XII.

Daniel in the Lion's Den.

IT pleased Darius, the king, to set over the kingdom an hundred and twenty princes, which should rule over the whole kingdom; and over these three presidents, of whom Daniel was first—that the princes might give an account unto them, and the king should have no damage.

Then Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, and the king thought to set him over the whole realm.

We notice that as soon as Daniel was set over the whole realm, the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against him, concerning the kingdom; but they could find nothing against him; so they consulted together and said, "We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God." As much as to say; this man has discharged every duty assigned to him; he has been faith-

ful, and we find no fault in him, in reference to his duties in the kingdom. A fine tribute to his loyalty and his ability as a ruler.

I thank God for such a man as Daniel. He was true to the worship of the God of heaven and earth, not of silver and gold; he worshiped the true and only God of the universe. Neither could the princes and lords shake the faith that Daniel had in his Lord.

These rulers of the kingdom did not acknowledge Daniel's God as their God, and all the men in authority agreed within themselves to establish a royal statute, and make a firm decree, that whoever should ask a petition of any God or man, for thirty days, except the king, should be cast into the lion's den. The decree was established and King Darius signed the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not.

But what effect did this decree have on Daniel? It had just about as much weight on his heart, and did just about as much good as the stone which was laid at the sepulchre to restrain Jesus from rising from the dead

on the morning of the resurrection. The threats of the princes, and the desire of the king, could not deter him from trusting in the God of heaven and earth.

Daniel knew in whom he put his trust; and though these wicked men thrust him into the lion's den, they could not harm the soul, or keep Daniel from trusting in the true refuge of all men.

After it had been made known to Daniel that the decree of the king had gone forth, he did not fall down before this mighty ruler of men; but he went into his house, and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed to the God in whom he believed and whom he served.

Is not this grand man Daniel a great example for the whole world? He did not fear them that could kill the body, but were not able to kill the soul.

We notice these men in authority assembled and found Daniel praying to his God, as was his custom. Then they went and spoke to the king, concerning the decree, saying, "Hast

thou not signed a decree, that every man that shall ask a petition of any God or man within thirty days, save of thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?" And the king's answer was, "The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not."

Then they unbosomed all to the king, saying that Daniel regarded him not, nor the decree that he had signed; and they did not fail to make known to the king that Daniel had made his petition three times a day.

I believe the king thought within himself that he would force Daniel to fear him, and to reverence and bow down to him, and respect the decree that he had signed. He felt, no doubt, that he had power to rule over Daniel, and if kind words would not do, he would try what virtue there was in the fierce lions.

When the king heard all that was told him, concerning Daniel, he was sore displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he labored until the going down of the sun, for that purpose.

But these men, who had set their hearts on the destruction of Daniel, seemed to be watching him closely, and they again assembled unto the king to call his attention to the law of the Medes and Persians, which was that no decree, nor statute which the king established, may be changed. Still this did not have the desired effect on Daniel, and he continued to serve the God of heaven, rather than to bow down to decrees of earthly kings.

Then came the time when Daniel's faith was to be tried, for the king commanded, and they brought Daniel and cast him into the lion's den. Do you suppose that this king thought Daniel would come out unharmed? You remember he said to him: "Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee." They wanted to make sure that there was no possible chance for Daniel to escape, for they brought a stone and laid it upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own hand and signet, and with the signet of his lords, that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel.

After the king's orders had been carried out, he returned to his palace for rest, for he had labored hard to deliver this innocent man.

Christ once suffered the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God—being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit. So Daniel was willing to be put to death, that he might honor and glorify his blessed Lord. He was willing for his enemies to be in seeming triumph that he might be accounted worthy to die rather than serve the devil.

When I think of the trials of Jesus Christ and His disciples in all ages of the world, His persecutions, His death upon the cross for all the world, I bow my head in reverence to Him as the one Being that ought to receive the homage due Him as King of kings and Lord of lords.

We notice that after King Darius had returned to his palace, he passed a restless night, fasting, and his sleep went from him. Do you wonder that he could not sleep? I do not; but I wonder why he did not pray as

well as fast, after all he had done to Daniel.

We are told that when the morning dawned, the king went in haste to the den of lions and he cried with a loud voice and said, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?"

I don't believe the king fasted on this awful night, for fear of Daniel being hurt; but I believe he feared and trembled before the God of heaven and earth, though he did not say so, but his actions were such as to prove to us that he almost acknowledged Daniel's God, as his God, during this night of fasting.

When Daniel heard the king calling to him, his voice rang out upon the air and he told the glad, good news that the angels came and stopped the mouths of the lions, and that they had not hurt him. These lions, with all the strength they possessed, stood powerless at God's command, and while Daniel had neither bed nor pillow, God pillowed his head and he feared no evil.

Let us listen to the words of the Psalmist, when he says, "Though I walk through the

valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Daniel knew that God was with him and that no harm should come to him, even in the lion's den.

We are told that when the king knew that Daniel was unhurt, he commanded that they should take him up out of the den.

It seems that the king was not willing that Daniel's accusers should go unpunished, and he commanded that these men, their children, and their wives, should be cast into the den of lions; but these people were not followers of Daniel's God, for we are told that their bones were broken in pieces by the lions, that Daniel had been confined with all night long.

Then was peace declared by the king, and Daniel's God acknowledged by the king and a new decree made, one very different from that of the first one. The decree was that in every dominion and realm of this kingdom, the kingdom of King Darius, men shall acknowledge the God of heaven and earth,

and that Daniel's God be worshiped supreme.

I say again, thank God for the life of Daniel, and his influence over the generations yet unborn.

We have two characters before us, the good and the bad, and we behold the end of both. So it has been through all time, and they will both reap their reward and be judged and punished according to the deeds done in the body.

When the storms of life are over,
And we lay our burdens down,
When with Him we safely anchor,
We shall wear a starry crown.

CHAPTER XIII.

Christ Raiseth Lazarus to Life.

NOW a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha."

Mary surely loved Jesus, for we are told she anointed Him with ointment and wiped His feet with her hair.

When Lazarus got sick, we are told they sent for Jesus, showing very clearly that they believed that Jesus could cure his sickness. The message they sent was as follows: "Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick." These beloved sisters wanted the Great Physician of soul and body to come to prescribe for their brother, because they believed He could restore him to health again.

They did not send an urgent request that He come at once. No doubt they had faith to believe, as He knew all things, that He would do what was wise and best for the dear family and for the glory of God.

When the message was delivered to Jesus, He said, "This sickness is not unto death." As much as to say, go tell these sisters not to be alarmed, Lazarus is not dangerously ill; and this sickness is for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby. From the beginning unto the end of the world, Jesus will be doing something to draw men and women into the Kingdom of God. Sometimes now, as in the days of old, He sends into our homes the angel of death and claims, for His own, those dearer to us than even our own lives, and often the fairest in the home, one who smiles with us in prosperity and weeps with us in adversity. But it is no mystery to me why Jesus takes unto Himself the fairest and the purest; there's no other fit for His kingdom.

When we enter our rose bower, to pluck flowers for the room, we get only the best and leave the others, very often for further development in beauty and loveliness. Just so it often happens when Christ takes from us our loved ones; He takes those that are nearest developed, that beauty may be added

to His kingdom. So, frequently Jesus leaves us in this world, and gives time and opportunity that we may be brighter and better when He calls for us.

When the Lord received the message that Lazarus was sick He did not come at once, but stayed two days longer. These were two days of suspense and sorrow to the two dearly beloved disciples at Bethany; but they were two days necessary to bring the glory of God in the end; for Jesus said, "this sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby."

Some may say, if He really loved this dear family, why did He not go at once to their assistance and relieve them of their sorrows? Jesus knew how to go about His Father's business, and waited the two days longer that the result might end in greater faith and happiness to the two sisters, and greater glory to the world because of the delay.

After the two days had expired, Jesus said to His disciples, "Let us go into Judæa again." But some of His disciples were fear-

ful for Jesus to go into Judæa, for the Jews sought to stone Him; but Jesus knew His mission and He feared no evil. Then He said unto them, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep."

The disciples were dull of understanding; they did not know why Jesus would disturb Lazarus, if he were sleeping; they did not understand that Jesus spoke of the sleep in death. Then said Jesus plainly, "Lazarus is dead."

Jesus was glad, for the sake of the people, that He was not with Lazarus when he died. He knew His power to raise the dead, and what was to come to the world, because he purposed to give Lazarus back to his sisters alive; but He was trying by all this to open the understanding of the world of the wonderful power of the resurrection from the dead.

When Jesus reached the lonely home of Mary and Martha, and found the Jews there, that had come to comfort these sisters, He was, no doubt, glad to make them an argu-

ment they could not gainsay in reference to His power to raise the dead. I don't suppose Mary and Martha had even thought that Jesus meant to bless them by raising Lazarus then, until they looked into His blessed face. No doubt hope and faith revived in their souls and they began to take courage.

This circumstance brings to my mind the beautiful lines of the poet, written some time ago on the death of a dear friend, which read as follows:

"Now let our mourning hearts revive,
And all our tears be dry;
Why should those eyes be drown'd in grief,
Which view a Saviour nigh?"

When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met Him, and these were the words she spoke: "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." I can almost see the tears streaming down her cheeks as she looked into the face of Him in whom she believed, and to whom she had come to unfold the grief of her broken heart. Her great faith was expressed when she said, "I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt

ask of God, God will give it thee." Wonderful faith, beautifully expressed. And then the great heart of the Son of God responded to that faith, when He said, "Thy brother shall rise again." But still her faith had not reached the point where Jesus wanted to bring her, before He conferred the blessing. Her words showed she was not ready for the immediate blessing when she said, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Then Jesus made a stronger impression when he said, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. Believest thou this?" This was the climax; this brought Martha where she was ready to receive the blessing, and she answered Him and said, "Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God." Then was Jesus ready to say, "Lazarus, come forth."

After Martha had made her confession, she went to seek her sister and when she had found her, she said to her, "The Master is come and calleth for thee." The record does not tell us anything else that Martha said to

Mary, yet we may infer that these dear girls embraced each other and shed tears of joy as Martha unfolded to her sister the precious promise that Jesus had made to her, concerning their brother.

We notice a very singular fact, that when Mary met the Saviour she used the same words and made the same confession as did Martha. To my mind this is complete evidence that the spirit was leading them in their interview with the Saviour.

When Jesus saw Mary weeping, and the the Jews, also weeping, He groaned in the spirit and said, "Where have ye laid him?"

We see when Jesus commanded the stone to be rolled away that Martha's faith was about to fail her in this trying hour, and she said, "He hath been dead four days," as much as to say, by this time decomposition has set in. But see how Jesus reassured her and strengthened her, when He said: "Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God?"

Surely these were anxious moments to these dear sisters, as they listened and lin-

gered about the tomb, awaiting the restoration of their brother to life again.

'Tis the grace of Jesus,
That lightens every sorrow,
Fills the heart with gladness,
And gives a bright to-morrow.

Yes, the brighter morrow will surely come, for Jesus said with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth." No doubt many who stood by the tomb thought this a vain and useless command; but the word of God tells us that Lazarus did come forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and Jesus told them to loose him and let him go.

Oh, how we need Jesus to loose us that we may have freedom and have life. We need to be loosed, because we are dead in trespasses and in sins. We are bound by the wicked one to our own destruction in hundreds of ways, and only Jesus can loose us from our bondage.

I shall not attempt to express an opinion of the joy of these sisters, as they looked into the face of their dear brother that had been raised to life again; no language is adequate

to the task; the joy and peace and faith that filled their hearts at that time was inexpressible.

We are told in the word that many believed on Jesus, after they had seen the things which He did, but not all, for some of them went away and told the enemies of Jesus what things had been done by Him. They acknowledged that He did many miracles, and were they to let Him alone, all men would believe on Him and claim Him as the Christ.

These people were like some people are in our day. When a precious boy or girl gives his or her heart to God, the finger of scorn is pointed at them, and often sorely persecuted for their faith in Christ.

From that day, which I believe was the day Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, and brightened the lives of Mary and Martha, they took counsel to put Jesus to death.

Let's think of that home, our heavenly home,
Where sickness and sorrow ne'er come;
There we'll meet with those gone before,
And our Saviour ever adore.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Temptation of Christ.

WE notice that Jesus was led into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, and that He was led by the spirit.

Jesus was not only led by the spirit into the wilderness, but he was led by the spirit in all things. In the first service in the synagogue, He said that the Spirit of the Lord was upon Him to preach the gospel of the kingdom. Wherever he went and under all circumstances, the spirit of the Lord was upon Him, to direct in all things.

Sometimes the disciples of Jesus would warn Him of what appeared to be approaching danger, but Jesus knew the spirit of God was with Him, and that no hand could pluck Him out of His Father's hands.

How oft has Satan led us on
By the spirit of sin and shame?
How oft we hunger on our way,
While sin and Satan are to blame!

Can we lay one blame on Jesus,
And our faults that bring us grief?
Can we say we trust in Jesus,
And from burdens get relief?

If so, we can say like Jesus,
When the tempter came to Him,
On the pinnacle of the temple,
When temptation failed to win.

If Christ would only worship him,
Rich gifts he had laid up in store;
And freely would he give to Him
If He would worship and adore.

If Satan would try to tempt the Lord,
One so perfect and so true,
Are you surprised, dear sinner friend,
That he so often comes to you?

His answer to the tempter came
In words of wisdom strong, but kind;
He exercised His lordship sane,
And showed His power divine.

Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God,
For He alone can save;
For all He shed His precious blood,
For all His life He gave.

The angels came to Him in need,
To our loving Saviour true;
And if we will discard Satan,
The Saviour will help us through.

We notice that Jesus fasted forty days and forty nights before the tempter came to Him. This wonderful example was given for a wise purpose. I believe that Satan thought that Christ was so very hungry, after these forty days of fasting, he would be sure to overcome Him.

Satan comes to us in the same way, but not with the same results. He comes to us when we are weak, and our faith has almost failed us. He comes to us through our fleshly appetites and he hopes through the avenue of some of our passions he will succeed in getting us to deny our Lord and Master. We allow Satan to come into our lives and fill our hearts with sinful thoughts and sow the seeds of evil in the most fertile spots of our passions, that they may come up in sinful deeds and wreck our lives.

When Satan came to Jesus first, all he told Him to do was to make bread out of stones. He did this for a double purpose: he thought Jesus would consent to do this because He was hungry and at the same time prove that He was the Son of God, or that

He was Divine as well as human. We see the wisdom of Jesus in His refusal to do his bidding and the fitness of His answer. Jesus said, quoting the word of God to Satan, "It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

Then the devil took Jesus up into the Holy City and set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and appealed to Him from another standpoint. But we see that Christ was wise in His answer—He said, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Shall not call upon the power of God for an unnecessary thing.

When we put Satan behind us and resist the temptation he brings us, remembering God has said, with every temptation He will make a way for our escape, we will be sure to defeat him, as our Master did.

We are taught to rejoice under all circumstances in life, and to count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations, knowing the Lord will deliver the godly out of temptation

and reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.

But the devil was not yet satisfied, for he next took Jesus up into an exceeding high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory thereof. He promised to give the Saviour all of these, if He would only fall down and worship him. Jesus then said, "Get thee hence Satan; for it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."

When the devil had tried in every conceivable way to tempt Jesus and found it impossible to do so, he left Him and angels came and ministered unto Him.

The devil is seeking followers and if he fails one way, he tries another way. If we listen to him, he is sure to ensnare us; but if we turn our backs upon him, we will be like the Blessed Christ—angels will come and minister unto us.

Sometimes we feel weak in faith and think we have exhausted all our strength. It is good for us to feel that way; it is then that we lay hold on God's strength and some

sweet promise in His word, and are made stronger in our faith, hope and service.

All along in God's word we read of those who have accomplished wonderful things in His service. Though we may not do as others, but one thing we can do; we can do our best; we may sing

"If we can not speak like angels,
If we can not preach like Paul,
We can tell the love of Jesus,
We can say, He died for all."

CHAPTER XV.

The Lame Man Cured.

We read in the word, that Peter and John went up into the Temple at the hour of prayer, and there was a poor lame man sitting at the gate called Beautiful, asking alms of them that entered into the Temple.

I sometimes wonder what the lame man's thoughts were. Do you believe he thought of joining the company of believers, or did he want a contribution to help feed his afflicted body? I suppose he looked at it in this way: "I am in need, won't you give a dollar or so to help a poor cripple?"

But Peter and John had decided on a different course than giving their money, for we learn from the incident that they had no money; but Peter said unto him, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk."

It was now no longer necessary for the lame man to be brought there by loving hands, nor to be carried away in the same way as he was brought. We are told that he not only walked away, but that he went away leaping and praising God, and entered with Peter and John into the Temple.

This lesson teaches us that the Master had a mission to heal the bodies of men, as well as a mission to save their souls. It also teaches that we may be instrumental in doing good to men, wherever we come in contact with suffering humanity.

The people of to-day are so much like they were in ancient times, that I can imagine myself in the presence of those noted men. I say noted men, and for what were they noted? In my opinioion, they were noted for the grandest cause that man or woman ever engaged in, though the people said they were ignorant and unlearned; but the sequel showed they knew Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and that was enough to help the poor man in his great affliction.

We are told that Peter and John were cast

into prison for this generous act; and when questioned as to what right they had to heal this man, or by what power they did it, they were loyal to Christ and said, "Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, if we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole."

And if the sinner is ever made whole, it will be through this same crucified and risen Lord; "for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

Let us take courage, and like these men of old, testify to those we come in contact with and tell of a crucified and risen Saviour. He is the only name and power whereby we may have our souls cleansed and our bodies healed.

It seems to me, from the reading of God's word, that Peter wanted all Israel, as well as

those who had gathered there to hear the truth for themselves, to know it was not by their own power they had made the lame man to walk. He wanted it to be known that it was in the name of Jesus he had power to do these things—and also by faith in His name that men are made whole; faith upon the part of those who help the needy and faith upon the part of those who are to receive the blessing.

After the people saw that Peter and John were steadfast, were even bold in their remarks, they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus, and it put the people to studying.

When they had gone out of the council, the rulers conferred among themselves, saying, "What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we can not deny it."

After those rulers were convinced, having seen the man that was healed standing upright among those that had healed him, and knowing of a truth his infirmity was of over

forty years standing, yet in the face of all this they said among themselves, "Let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name." And they called Peter and John and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.

But these true followers of Jesus Christ, these consecrated Christians, cared not for their threats, and they soon told the people that were commanding them, in a way they could not doubt it, to whom they would hearken and whom they would serve, and they cried out, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye." Then they added, "We can not but speak the things which we have seen and heard."

Just so when we have been made new creatures in Christ Jesus, we can not but testify for Him; and if we are faithful, the world will soon cease to deride and will acknowledge that Christ is the Saviour of the world.

Did you ever attempt to do a piece of work and strive for hours to master it, but for

some reason, you lay it aside for days and even months, and when you resume it, it is all to go over again? The reason is, you are not in close touch with the work. And when we try to live without God in our hearts, when we rebel against Him and do not pray, we need not expect great blessings from Him. It is easier to serve God when we are in touch with Him, when we offer up our sincere petitions every day; we then can walk side by side with Him and be filled with His spirit. Let us not sit still and let all the splendid opportunities that God has placed in our hands to proclaim the glad tidings be lost to us and to our God.

Let us tell to the nations around,
What a precious Saviour we have found;
Proclaim the good news, wherever we go,
To a world lost in sin and woe.

CHAPTER XVI.

A Call to Faith and Repentance.

REPENTANCE toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the only hope of any man or woman, for a place in the kingdom of heaven. God makes repentance and faith inseparable. To exercise one, and leave off the other, means the loss of the soul. To appreciate the importance of repentance, we must understand the emphasis that God has put upon it.

When John the Baptist came to make ready a people for the coming kingdom, he said, "Repent and believe the gospel." Again he said, "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance."

When Jesus began His ministry, the first thing He said when He came down off of the mountain was, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." And when He sent out the twelve and again the seventy, He said, go preach repentance.

Remember He has said, "joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance."

When Jesus was about to leave the earth and become our Mediator, He said, "Thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

So then we see that repentance is the first step toward the kingdom, and coupled with it is that of faith. Without faith it is impossible to please God.

Then again it is said, "The just shall live by faith." Moreover it is said, above all, take the shield of faith.

What the world needs to-day is a faith that works by love, purifies the heart and overcomes the world.

Based on God's command to repent and have faith in the gospel, is God's invitation to seek salvation through Christ. "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

When we remember that salvation is God's free gift to man, and is offered to all men and women upon the terms of repentance and faith, it is so strange to see them neglect it. How we can turn a deaf ear to His invitations is more than I can understand.

Listen to some of God's invitations: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Then again, Christ said, if we ask, it shall be given unto us; if we seek, we shall find, and if we knock, it shall be opened unto us.

There are hundreds of like invitations offered us in the glorious gospel of the Son of God. The sun that shines so brightly and makes beautiful this world, is but a type of the Son of righteousness that has risen with healings in His wings and glory in His light, as He lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

The saddest thought in the whole question of our salvation is our proneness to neglect it. The last invitation, the last message to our

souls, will come to all, as surely as the sun sinks in the west, at the close of each day. The last argument will be made some time; the last sermon will be preached some where; the last wooings of God's spirit will come under some kind of circumstances; and God will say, "let them alone."

Do I hear some one say, as did the woman of Samaria, "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw."

How wonderful are the great supernatural events of life. But the greatest of all supernatural events is that Christ should come into saving contact with us; that He should come and supply all our needs.

Let us learn from this incident of the woman of Samaria, how quickly and how naturally the Saviour makes known His mission to the world. This woman came on an earthly mission, but how soon was it turned into a heavenly mission. Jesus said to the woman, "Give me to drink;" but the woman could not understand how a Jew could so ask favors at the hands of a Samaritan.

Then Jesus said to her, "If thou knewest

the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water."

So it is to-day, Jesus Christ is offering to the world living water by His own blessed gospel.

"The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." And again, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." This is life eternal, that ye believe on the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent.

We should thank God for the sweet promises contained in the book of life, to strengthen our faith, when persecutions arise and sorrow and distress overtake us. We should rejoice and be glad, because His goodness and mercy doth follow us and His strong arm is ever about us.

Another of the precious invitations Jesus has given us, reads as follows: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Though we have walked in forbidden paths and trampled His mercies under our feet, yet in the face of all this, He pities us and follows us unto the day of redemption.

God speed the time when every tongue and nation may cry out, not for rocks and mountains to fall on them and hide them from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne, but cry out like the young man who had great possessions did, when he said, "what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" And the Lord grant that all may follow the answer of the blessed Master, when He says, "Believe on the blessed Son of God," and we shall have treasures in heaven.

See how hard the law student sometimes applies himself for a proper interpretation of the laws of his state and nation. Why does

he do this? For profit and honor; that he may be useful and wise.

But the promise made to us, in the study of the higher laws of the spiritual realm, is far more profitable to us, having the promise of the life that now is, and that which is to come.

One of the warnings that God has given us in His word is, that the bed of sin and condemnation is "Shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it; and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it." Woe unto the rebellious children, that cover with a false garment and wrap themselves in their own righteousness. But when we cover ourselves with the robe of Christ's righteousness, we have an everlasting covering, and our eyes shall behold the King in His glory.

Oh, glorious day—oh, blessed hour; my soul leaps forward at the thought! In that great and notable day, when Christ shall come to earth, to gather up His jewels, what a day of joy it will be for those who are ready, awaiting His coming; and what a sad day it will be for those who have neglected this impor-

tant matter of making ready for the Master's coming. "Now is the accepted time. To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Jesus stands ready to take our sins away, so let us come and drink of the water of life, without money and without price.

Drink from the beautiful fountain,
That takes all our sins away;
Drink of the fountain so full of life,
That lasts throughout eternal day.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Great Supper.

"A CERTAIN man made a great supper, and bade many; and sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come, for all things are now ready."

The intention of this parable is to give us some idea of the gospel of the Kingdom; to show the great heart of God in the conception of the Kingdom, and to further show some of His plans in carrying out the Kingdom. One of the striking features of this parable is the foolish excuses offered by those who were invited to come to the feast. It illustrates the utter senseless excuses men make now why they do not accept the gospel in our time.

Another feature is the manner in which guests are invited. In our modern customs, we invite those who stand high socially, or are able to return the favor with a similar supper.

The word of God says, "When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours, lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee."

So when we make a supper, we should call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind.

Just here I would avoid intimating that all the woes are to the rich and the blessings to the poor, for the poor can be as godless as the rich. Yes, all manner of wickedness may abound in the hearts of the poor; but God knows our hearts. He knows if we invite the poor, the maimed, the blind and all those characters, that we do it out of a good conscience; we have not done this to be seen of men and women, nor to have them invite us in return, but we have done this in the name and fear of God, because He has said, "Thou shalt be blessed; for they can not recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."

And when one of them that sat at meat with Him heard these things, he said unto Him, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in

the Kingdom of God." The rich and poor alike can gain admittance into the heavenly kingdom and partake of the bread of life; but so often the poor are cast out, and Jesus knowing this, had pity on them.

Let us go back to our subject, the great supper: We find, notwithstanding all things were ready and invitations had been sent out, that the people were not ready and were not interested in the feast being spread. Some had one excuse and some had another, and though they were very foolish ones, they made them just the same.

It seems that this lord was very patient and considerate—he waited as long as he well could, and then made his invitation broader and his demands more urgent; but still they did not come.

The first said, "I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused."

Another said, "I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused."

And still another said, "I have married a wife, and therefore I can not come."

These excuses are the same kind that men are making now to keep away from the kingdom of heaven. They were unnecessary, vain and foolish in the extreme.

The servant, that invited the people to this supper, must have been faithful. He did not go away saying he had done his part; that he would sit down and take his ease, but he went back and pressed his invitation, and showed his lord all these things.

Then his master said, go again, for my house must be filled. Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the maimed, the poor, the halt and the blind.

This servant obeyed all these orders and came back and said, "Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room."

How true this saying of Christ's servants of the gospel. Though innumerable multitudes have passed over the river of death, and countless multitudes are singing the songs of Moses and the Lamb, yet there is room for thousands more; yes, room for all who will

come. Room in God's everlasting love, and room in His mansion above.

He said again to his servant, "Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled."

If we have tasted of the word of life and been made whole, God is saying to us now, "Go out and compel them to come." Go with the love of God in our hearts and lead them to the Master's feet.

Jesus says, "Whosoever doth not bear His cross, and come after me, can not be my disciple;" and I say, as did the apostle, "Lord increase our faith."

Notice the disposition of this servant as his lord sent him out repeatedly to assemble the guests that had been bidden; how willingly he obeyed his master's command.

We should be like him, and go whenever and wherever we are called upon to go. Follow Him in all things and under all conditions of life. Let us humble ourselves before God and He will sustain us.

This question of humbleness brings to my mind the prayer offered up by the publican.

You remember two men went up into the temple to pray, the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. While both of these men prayed, there was a vast difference in the manner in which they prayed. The prayer of the Pharisee was the one that pleased himself—the prayer of the publican was the one that pleased God.

The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, or even as this publican." See him basking in the sunshine of his own vain imaginations and self-conceit as he says, "I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess."

But the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast and said, "God be merciful to me a sinner." This publican wanted mercy and he got it, and he went down to his house justified rather than the other.

Let's make a feast for Jesus,
  Invite Him as our guest;
He'll accept the invitation,
  And give us peace and rest.

CHAPTER XVIII.

By Faith David Saw His Defense.

DO you remember what David's defense was? We have it in his own words, from his own lips. The word of God tells us, "With the mouth confession is made unto salvation;" and David said, "My defense is of God, which saveth the upright in heart."

Would to God that every man, woman and child could say as did the Psalmist, "My defense is of God." In other words, confess that God is true; that He is righteous, and that He will defend us if our hearts are right; He will never leave us nor forsake us. Is not this a sweet thought to those who sojourn here below, that there is one in whom we can trust and feel safe, under all the storms of life? When we retire at night, we can submit everything to His care and keeping, and feel that all is well. But how are we to at-

tain to this high standard of submission, or to get into the confidence of God?

David, in his song of praise, tells us we may attain unto this by faith. We must trust God and believe His word. We must believe that God is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. That He is not only able and willing to save us from sin, but that He will defend us in the sore trials of life.

Do you know a lawyer who is so benevolent and so patriotic, who will come to a poor cast-out and say to him: "I will defend you, regardless of money?" That is not human nature. But God the Father knows all about us; He knows our weaknesses, but He has promised to defend us, without money and without price.

To illustrate: If we go to an attorney to defend us, when in trouble, we tell him all—we can not withhold anything. It does not matter how familiar he may be with the case, we must tell it all. Just so it is with God whom we should seek to worship. He knows all about us, but there must be an effort on

our part, a confession of our guilt and of our need of His help.

By faith David was able to see that God was all and in all to him, and that He would befriend and defend him in all the rugged paths of life. David was only a man, and can we expect the God of heaven and earth to do more for David than for you and I? No, we can not expect that, but we can expect the same God that David trusted and believed in to be our shield and buckler and our hiding place. He is to us the same loving Father, who cares for us and helps us in our weakness.

David says if the wicked turn not, that God "will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready." We can readily understand the fate of the wicked, as well as the glorious triumph of the righteous; and is it possible for us to justify ourselves and criticise the God of heaven and earth, if we occupy a seat on the left hand of our Father, where we will hear the words, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

Think how the Father loved us, and with such love as to give his only begotten Son to die on the rugged cross for all mankind, that through His death and suffering, we might have life everlasting. It is not because our heavenly Father does not love us, that He sometimes chastens us, but because He wants to make us better.

Sometimes I try to compare parental love with that of our heavenly Father's love, but I find our love so insufficient, that the comparison fails.

We notice all along in the book of David, where he prayed God to deliver him from his enemies, and to save him from all that persecuted him.

Do you notice the words he uses just preceding his prayers, how humbly he comes to God? Sometimes he says, "O Lord my God, in thee do I put my trust." "Give ear to my words, O Lord, consider my meditation, hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King and my God; for unto thee will I pray." And again, "I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart."

Just as sure as we praise God with our whole heart, we may expect to be recompensed; we may expect a rich blessing, for He holds in store rich blessings for all who will come to Him by prayer through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

David praised God for all He did for him, and oftentimes called upon Him when he was in trouble, when the way was rough, and when the way was smooth, he never forgot his dependence upon the God in whom he put his trust.

Forget not the Lord that saves us,
That sets our poor souls free;
He will guide us on in safety,
We'll rest in the shade of the tree.

Praise Him who watches o'er us,
And bids the darkness flee;
Until we safely anchor,
And His loving face we see.

CHAPTER XIX.

Christ the Door and the Good Shepherd.

WE learn from the word of God that there is no other way given whereby we must be saved, except to believe in the Son of God. That Son of God is the Shepherd of the sheep—Shepherd of the souls of all men. He is also the door into the sheepfold. If any man will undertake to go to the Father except by Jesus Christ, he is counted a thief and a robber; for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. There is but one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.

What does God's word tell of the man who seeks the kingdom except through the door, Jesus Christ? These are the words: "He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber."

Jesus gave this parable to the world, when

men had different opinions of Him, and it is clear to my mind, that Jesus is the door and the Good Shepherd. He has taught in His gospel that He is "The way, the truth, and the life," and that no man can come unto the Father, but by Him.

"When he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him; for they know his voice." When Jesus calls Himself the Good Shepherd, He is making a comparison of His relation to the children of God, and there is no word in the language that has such appropriate meaning of that relation like the term "Good Shepherd." The good shepherd cared for, watched over, directed, and would have given his life, if need be, for the sheep. Jesus, as our Good Shepherd, has done all that. It is by his watchful care, and the chastening rod, that we are kept in the straight and narrow way.

What would be thought of a shepherd that would leave the sheep to the mercy of the wolves, when they came to destroy the sheep? He would be called an hireling and not a shepherd. A true shepherd would stand to

his post of duty. Just so our Good Shepherd will never leave, nor forsake us in any of the trials and battles of life.

When billows roll beneath us,
And lightnings flash above us,
His loving hand will lead us,
And in the right He'll defend us.

"I am the door, by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." See how the Saviour speaks of this tender relationship to us. He has no conditions in it, and does not modify His language; He says, "He shall be saved." This Good Shepherd is the bread of life and the water of life. He says, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

But what route must we take that we may find our Father's house and enter into eternal life?

Jesus has given us the way-bill: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him."

When Jesus was here among men, His travels were not always pleasant and peaceful; no, far from that. So let us take courage, though our road be rugged and our feet are pressed with thorns, let us remember that Jesus the Good Shepherd has first trodden the road and made it easy.

The Good Shepherd has said, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them, also, I must bring, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd."

What a glorious thought that there will be complete triumph over the bondage and dominion of sin; and that the higher law of liberty, that is in the gospel of Christ, will make us free from all sin. The time is coming when every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess Jesus Christ as Lord of all, to the glory of the Father. Death will be swallowed up in victory and the grave be emptied of all the loved ones.

There comes into my mind a conversation between myself and a relative, regarding our flight from earth to heaven. Said she, "I feel for myself, all is well; but I fear some of my

loved ones and friends are not ready. Were it not for that, it would be a journey I would like to take." But added she, "I want to see all aboard, and then me step in," and I bowed my head and wept.

Thank God for the Christian's hope, and for their consecrated efforts to point those in darkness to the marvelous light of the gospel, as it is revealed in Jesus Christ.

Let us endure hardships, if need be, and follow where He leads us and at last, we will wear the crown.

When Christ the Good Shepherd assured the Jews that He had power to lay down His life, and take it again, they said, "He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him?" Others said, "Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?" But Jesus assured them that His work was sufficient to show to all mankind that He was the Christ.

The people who rejected Jesus Christ were near-sighted; they had no broad vision of the Kingdom, and were not of the Shepherd's fold. They did not know His voice; they had not believed on the Son of God.

Christ said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." And again, "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

But this did not satisfy some of the Jews, and they took up stones to stone Him. They did not love Jesus, and their hearts were evil. Then they sought to take Jesus, but He escaped out of their hands.

Christ is the door, through which we pass,
To gain that home of rest, at last;
He will the door open wide,
And make secure, our sins to hide.

CHAPTER XX.

The Master Washeth His Disciples' Feet.

WHAT does it mean? Who are to do it, and where are we to do it?

An intelligent answer to all these questions should be given by God's children, who are loyal and who are striving to follow Him in spirit and in truth.

One thing is agreed upon by all Christians. The Saviour meant to teach us that we should be willing to seek a low place in the Kingdom, if we would go up higher, that we should be willing to do any kind of menial service, that we might render real comfort to those in need. He gave the lesson, to teach us that we should be ready to do any and all kind of good works for the purpose of winning the world to Christ.

As to the question, who shall do it, and when we are to do it, it is best to let the scriptures speak themselves.

"And supper being ended, the devil having

now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him; He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments, and took a towel, and girded himself, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded."

But when He came to Peter, he expressed himself as being unworthy and said, "Thou shalt never wash my feet." But listen to the words of Jesus, in reply: "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me."

Jesus meant, if I do not wash your soul in the blood of the Lamb—in my own blood—you can not be saved from your sins. So these words of Jesus are applicable to us to-day. If He does not give to us the benefits of His death on the cross, as an atonement for us, we will have no part or lot in His righteousness, and life eternal.

When Peter comprehended the Saviour's meaning, he said, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." He was willing for Jesus to have His way; willing to be led by Him and be obedient in all things.

He feared, lest his part be taken away, and he be left to grope in darkness.

Jesus was willing to wash His disciples' feet if they had traveled for miles in the dust and heat. Did He not set an example for us to follow? Did He not say, after He had washed their feet, "Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."

Then again, He said, "The servant is not greater than his lord." And are we, the servants of our Lord, greater than our Lord who sacrificed His life for all? God forbid. If we know God's will and do it not, can we expect to grow in grace and in a knowledge of the truth?

Jesus not only wanted to settle a strife among the disciples, who should be counted the greatest, but He wanted once for all time, and to all ages, to show us that we must not become exalted by any station or condition in life. Wherever need requires our service, we

should give it cheerfully and willingly. Moreover, He taught us that there was reward in service; for He said to His disciples on this occasion, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

Jesus knew that the enemy was near, even at the door; he sat near Him; had eaten with Him, and felt sure he had deceived Him. He was sure he could lean on his own strength, and ignore even the Son of God, the Saviour of the world.

Is there one walking in our midst, trying to deceive Jesus, and walking in forbidden paths? If so, say like one of old, I will arise and go to my Father, and be cleansed from my sins; I will no longer feed swine and perish with hunger, when there is so much in my Father's house; I will no longer waste my substance in wicked living and in rebellion.

Then again, Jesus gave us this example of foot-washing to demonstrate our love for each other. So important was this matter, that He called it a new commandment, for He said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that

ye love one another." And then again, he said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world," and if we follow after Him, we shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

Let us walk in the light, dear children,
Like soldiers of the cross.
Let us follow after righteousness,
And we will never suffer loss.

CHAPTER XXI.

Christ Purgeth the Temple.

HOW important that the house of God be purged from its corruption, that it may be clean for the Master's use. The whip of small cords was necessary to be used by our Saviour, that He might be honored thereby.

The Apostle Paul tells us also that we should be cleansed from all filthiness, and to purge out the old leaven, that we may be a new lump.

We are taught in the word of God, that "in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth, and some to honor, and some to dishonor. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work."

A heart-cleansing is the great need of the home, the church and the nation. A purify-

ing of our thoughts and actions is what Christ demands, that we may be His true disciples, that we may honor and glorify Him in our lives.

Our bodies are the temple of God, as well as the church house is the place to render an acceptable service to God. They both need to be kept clean from all error and filthiness, so that God can use them both.

When Jesus went up to Jerusalem, when the Jews' Passover was at hand, and found in the temple those that sold oxen, sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting, He drove them out with a whip of small cords and rebuked them for making His Father's house an house of merchandise, instead of a place of worship.

So God says to us now, make not my house a place of desecration, a place of material profit and worldly gain. Do not destroy its sacred altars, its holy worship and hallowed influence, by unwarranted, useless and unprofitable service. It is a fearful thing to disobey and disregard the sacredness of God's house.

To-day many are in the temple, as true soldiers of the cross, preacing a pure gospel—preaching Jesus Christ and Him crucified to a lost and ruined world; warning men to flee from the wrath to come, and to be reconciled to God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

God's voice is still ringing in our ears, "Take these things hence."

His disciples remembered, after Jesus went away, that He said, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." Sin in any form will devour us; will devour our energy and strength; and if we indulge in it long, it will work death in our members, and will end in the destruction of the soul and the final separation from the presence of God and the holy angels.

God forbid that any one, in this bible land, where the servants of God have exhausted their strength, trying to win souls to Christ, should be cast into outer darkness, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

We notice Jesus spoke these words to some that questioned Him: "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." After

hearing these words, they were amazed and said, "Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?"

But in answer it might be said, did not Jesus make this whole world in six days, and rested on the seventh day from all His labors? Then why should any one doubt the power of Jesus to rear the temple in three days? But Jesus did not refer to the material temple at Jerusalem, but to the raising of His own precious body from the grave. Their eyes were dim and they could not see afar off; their ears were dull of hearing, and they could not understand. But after Jesus had been crucified, and risen from the dead, then His disciples remembered that He had said this unto them, and they believed the Scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.

Just so with you and I, dear reader, after we have trampled God's grace and mercy under our feet and have crucified, afresh, the Son of God, in that we have been disobedient and turned a deaf ear unto all His pleadings, until the Holy Spirit takes its flight for the

last time, then will we remember the Scripture, "How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not." He has said in His word, "My spirit shall not always strive with man." And again He has said, "Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone." The heart is hardened, the neck is stiffened for the last time. How sad the thought!

When Jesus was in Jerusalem at the Passover, many believed on his name when they saw the miracles which He did. But Jesus did not commit Himself unto them, because He knew what was in man, and needed not that any should testify of man.

So to-day, as well as of old, God knows what is in man, woman, boy or girl. If he or she is a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, He knows it, for not a hair falls from our heads without His notice.

If we are the disciples of Satan, He knows it without our confession or testimony; for the darkness can not hide from that allseeing eye, that beholds all things, good or bad. God

searches the hearts of all men, and at His command we must, one day, at some place and at some time, answer to our names and give an account of all the deeds done in the body.

Let us go to Jesus and be cleansed from all sin, and be made new creatures in Christ Jesus; be led by the spirit and put sin behind us, and press onward, forgetting the past and looking to the future, trusting in Him who is mighty to save to the uttermost all who will come unto God by Him.

Behold, behold the Lamb of God!
Behold His cleansing power;
Behold the Saviour on the cross,
In His sin-atoning power.

CHAPTER XXII.

Heavenly Treasures.

"AND the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there." What a wonderful occasion was this! The blooming flowers, the graceful forms and the beautiful faces! But there was one, in the midst of that scene, that outshined them all. He was not only the honored guest, but He was "the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely." Jesus the Son of Mary was there to perform His first miracle; to give to the world a demonstration of power that was forever to mark His ministerial life on earth.

He was there also to demonstrate the value of hidden treasures. The water turned into wine showed a fitness for man's needs—that He could supply all our wants.

Jesus does not only supply all our wants, but He is ever present to help in time of need. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock," is

the attitude of the Son of God toward a world lost in sin. He stands with outstretched arms, ready to turn the water into wine, ready to turn darkness into light, sorrow into gladness and bondage into freedom.

Do you remember the words of the mother of Jesus who said, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it?" And I say to you, whatsoever Jesus saith unto you, do it. If He says in that sweet, gentle tone, "Son, give me thine heart," do it. If He says, "Sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor," do it; and do it all for the honor and glory of God, and your reward is sure; thou shalt have treasures in heaven.

Dear reader, let us ask ourselves the question: Are we free from moth and rust, from the dangers of temptation and the allurements of the world? Treasures laid up in heaven should be our great aim in life; the only security to the lost soul; the only protection against the battles of life and the day of assignment in the world to come.

Jesus, in His glorious invitation says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are

heavy laden, and I will give you rest. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

The soul that has been cleansed from sin, that has been made pure and white in the blood of the Lamb, is always ready to give evidence of having been born again—that our lives are hid with God in Christ. He will lead us beside the still waters of His grace; and if we thirst, we may drink of that everflowing fountain of God's eternal love.

Let us remember the words of the Master, "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal."

Let us lay up treasures in heaven
And be swift on errands of love,
That we a starry crown may wear,
In that mansion up there, above.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The Fore-Runner of Christ, John the Baptist.

"THERE was a man sent from God, whose name was John."

Let us start with the thought, that this man was sent from God, not from kings nor rulers of earth; not by chance nor by accident. He was sent for a purpose; He had a mission to perform and a message to bring. That mission was to bear testimony of a great fact—to be the honored message of the world's greatest event.

God did not send him as a detective, nor as a spy. God sent him to bear witness of that light that was to be the light of the world; a messenger that was to honor God in the message.

John came to tell the world of the advent of the Son of God, the Saviour of the world. His mission was to preach the doctrine of repentance, and to make ready the coming King-

dom. Besides, he was to perform a most solemn and sacred duty, to baptize the Saviour of the world, that he called the "Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

John was to hold the banner of the King Immanuel—to point men and women to that Being who was to be a "hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." He came to tell of that Being who was to be the refuge of all men—the refuge under which all men may be safe, when the water shall uncover the hiding place of the disobedient and the lost of earth.

John said of Jesus, "of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." He said, also, that "the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

As John went preaching the coming Kingdom, the people were amazed and wondered who this man John was, and they sent Priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask John who he was, and he made an honest confession and said, "I am not the Christ." John, no doubt,

thought if they knew he was not the Christ, they would be satisfied; but they were eager to know who he was.

Then they asked him, "Art thou Elias?" And he said, "I am not." Again questioning him, they asked, "Art thou that prophet?" And he answered, "No."

Then said they unto him, "who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?"

John did not say he was a great man, that nations must bow to and worship; but he said: "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias."

And I say unto you, as did the voice in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord now, for straight and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Listen to the calls to-day, as they echo from mouth to mouth, from hill to hill, from mountain to mountain, on the roadside, in the wilderness, in our homes and wherever we are, for we must all appear before God, to an-

swer for the deeds done in the body. And as one of old, make an honest confession, for an honest confession is good for the soul; and we should heed the voice of the Lord, whether in the wilderness or on the plains.

They said to John, "Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet."

John answered and said, "I baptize with water; but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not." John was able, and was sent to baptize with water, but Christ alone was able to baptize with the Holy Ghost.

As John and two of his disciples were looking on Jesus, he said to them, "Behold the Lamb of God," and as they heard him speak, they followed Jesus. Jesus said unto them, "What seek ye?" "They said unto him, Rabbi (which is to say, being interpreted, Master) where dwellest thou?" and the Master told them to come and see.

Do we, in the stillness of the night, or in the busy hours of the day, turn our faces heavenward and ask the question, Master, where dwellest thou? That we may hear the

kind words fall from the lips of a crucified and risen Lord, "Come and see." That we may say, as Andrew did to Simon, "We have found the Messias," which is the Christ. Andrew not only found the Christ, but he brought Simon to the Saviour of the world. Can we not bring some one, some lost soul to Christ? Can we not lead some one in the straight and narrow way, that leads to life eternal?

Jesus said to Philip, "Follow me." It seems, from the reading of God's word, that Philip had a friend on his heart, and he found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Jesus saw Nathanael coming and He said, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile." Then Nathanael said, "Whence knowest thou me?" Jesus answered him saying, "Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee."

Oh, how blessed the thought, to know though we be under the fig tree, or in some secret place, the allseeing eye of our blessed Master is upon us; His loving care is around

us, and His protecting hand is shielding us from all harm and danger. 'Tis sweet to know that some dear friend in heaven and earth is ready to say to us, "Come and see." Come under the shadow of His wing and rest our tired souls.

Who knows but that Nathanael's thoughts were about the Master, when he was under the fig tree? Perhaps he was praying for light, for he said, "Thou art the Son of God."

Believe and be saved, and when you have believed, call your friends and carry them to Jesus.

What means these great revivals and oft repeated prayers? The answer is, "Come and see."

The house of God stands ready
To welcome you and me;
The doors stand ajar for all,
Will you not come and see

Our Heavenly Father will pilot us,
Whoever we may be;
And tenderly He is calling,
Sinner, "Come and see."

CHAPTER XXIV.

Saved by Grace.

THE meaning of this is that salvation comes to us by grace, as an unmerited favor from God—that God, through grace, meets all our wants, as we are held under the bondage of sin and death.

Paul puts this fact in a very striking manner, when he says, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."

Then again Paul declares, "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast."

The apostle John made this fact strong when he said, "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." This passage shows very clearly the superiority of grace over the law. The law, as our school master, can only bring us to Christ, while Christ, by His grace brings us to God. The grace of God takes us up, where

the law leaves us—where the law can go no further.

Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

This fact of grace being superior to the law is made beautiful by Paul, in another place, where he says: "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

These, and many other passages found in God's word, make it plain that grace is the supreme factor in man's salvation.

The word says, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world."

And to-day, as of old, there are thousands walking according to the course of this world, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and the lust thereof; and are defiling their bodies and blighting their lives by yielding to temptation,

which in the end, will destroy both soul and body in hell. These deluded ones are not stopping to count the cost; not thinking for a moment that their lives are not in their own hands and that their souls are immortal and will never die, forgetting that when this earthly tabernacle is dissolved, the spirit must go to God who gave it, to be consigned to a place of happiness or a place of misery.

How sad the thought that we poor mortals, without God and without hope in this world, are unable to prepare a place of refuge for our souls, when those that know us now, shall know us no more. But God who is rich in grace and mercy has prepared a place for us, even when we were dead in trespasses and in sins, and hath quickened us together with Christ.

When I read God's word and realize that my salvation is not in the hands of my friends or foes, but is in the hands of an all-wise and loving Saviour who knows my weakness; one slow to anger and plenteous in mercy, I bow my head in reverence to Him who sits on the throne, and with bowed head and clasped

hands, I thank God for the gift of His dear Son, who gave His life a ransom for all.

This grace is a free grace, without money and without price.

You know it is the custom of earthly kings, when they prepare a feast, to invite only the special guests. But not so with our King, for He says, "Call the poor, the maimed, the halt and the blind." He would have us go into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in, that His house might be filled. Salvation is free for all. The king upon his throne, and the peasant in his hut, are invited to this feast, and are called on equal terms and conditions. Heed his invitation: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden," for He has promised to give us rest.

When we have borne the burden and heat of the day, how sweet it is to know, that while we rest our tired bodies, an allseeing eye is watching over us; even in the stillness of the night, He shields us from harm and danger. He has prepared a mansion for us, where we may dwell in security and bliss forevermore—

where tears are never shed, troubles never come and farewells are never spoken.

Dear friends, do you not want a seat in this glorious mansion, this home of the soul, where families are reunited, and where we shall know as we are known? Where hearts, once severed in sadness and in tears, are reunited in joy and praise to Him who sits upon the throne, and who has redeemed us from sin and Satan. I want to be there, and I expect to be there, by the love and grace of God. It makes no difference who you are or what position you hold in this life, you have an invitation to this heavenly mansion, a seat in the Kingdom of God, a place of refuge, the home of the redeemed. This mansion has been bought with a price, purchased with the blood of Jesus Christ, and is free for all if we will but believe on Him and trust Him for His grace. "To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts."

We sometimes feel we are far away from this home of the soul, but let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

The Spirit of God must bear witness with our spirits, or we can never see God. The spirit of the wicked one can never give us a passport to God. And why? Because the spirit of the wicked one is evil, and we know that no evil can inherit the Kingdom of God. We must repent of our sins and become as little children, before we can enter the Kingdom.

Let us notice what is meant by the term "repent." It is not living a moral life, paying our just debts, staying at home and attending to our own business, nor going to the house of God once or twice a year; this is not repentance. I admit this is good, as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. These things can not save the soul; we must be purged from our sins and be made new creatures in Christ Jesus; we must leave off our sins, believe in and trust a personal Saviour, before we can be saved.

By the death of Christ on the cross we have access by one spirit unto the Father, and if we believe in His Son, we are no longer strangers and foreigners, but are of the house-

hold of faith; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.

Let no man build on any other foundation than Jesus Christ, lest the building be destroyed in the day of trial, because the building must be tried by fire.

Our habitation here is short,
Our pilgrimage often sad;
But by the grace of God, alone,
Our spirits are made glad.

CHAPTER XXV.

God's Dealings With Abraham.

WHEN Abraham was ninety and nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, "I am the Almighty God, walk before me and be thou perfect."

When God appeared unto Abraham (or Abram, as he was then called) He talked with him and made a covenant with him. The result of that covenant has been a great factor in the world's history. Because of it, Abraham has been called the father of the faithful.

We notice when Abram was old, God changed his name to Abraham, and from that day he was a wonderful figure in Biblical history. His loyalty to God, his fidelity to his family and his love for his fellow man, has shined upon the pages of history for the betterment of the world and the glory of God.

His pleadings with God before the gates of Sodom, his wisdom in handling his own

kinsfolk, his benevolence to the poor and his unparalleled faith in God as he went to offer Isaac upon the altar of sacrifice, are some of the stars that will never grow dim, and some of the landmarks of the gospel that will never be effaced.

It was a small number that God demanded of Abraham, that He might save the city; but may it not be true that the reason He does not pour out His blessings on many modern cities is because God can't find the number of righteous persons He has demanded shall be found. The tone of some of our revivals would be changed if there were more consecrated men and women in our churches. Yes, we would see souls saved, the churches would be built up and God's name would be glorified in the earth.

Do you remember what the Lord said to Abraham, just before He went down to investigate the wickedness of that city? He said, "Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous, I will go down now, and see whether they

have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me."

God goes when there is need, and He does what He purposes to do with His creatures. So let us turn our backs on sin, as the Lord has commanded; watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation; lest we enter the wicked city and are bound by its cords.

CHAPTER XXVI.

He Exhorteth to Love, and Putting on of the Whole Armor of God.

IT is declared in the scriptures, time and again, that "God is love." And both Christ and the apostles have taught that love is the fulfillment of all law. Christ said it is a new commandment—one more added to the ten already given.

Love is the best vision we get of the Kingdom. It comprehends all that is meant in our belief of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. It eclipses all other manifestations of good works that are given to the world, as we walk beside our fellow man in this world, and ends in the highest reward ever given.

So we can see a glorious purpose in Christ exhorting to love. Love in its conception, love in its manifestations, and love in its final rewards—love that endureth all things.

Jesus said of this love, "By this shall all

men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another." We are taught to love not in word, but in deed and in truth. Give the world the evidence by following all the commandments of our Lord and Master, for He says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments," and if we love Him, we will keep His commandments.

We are told to put on the whole armor of God. The apostle says, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."

Even though we be dead in sin, His grace is sufficient for us. Let us lift up our heads and look away from the cross to the glittering crown and be not faithless, but believing children, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Let us understand what the will of God is concerning us, and be filled with the spirit, making melody in our hearts.

Stand up for Christ, putting on the whole armor of God, having our loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness and our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; taking the

helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. We should pray always, and above all, take "the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked."

When Satan sees the Christian put on all these elements of the Christian armor, he bows his head in defeat and leaves the child of God, as he did the blessed Saviour on the mount.

When the Christian adds to his faith virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and charity, he is ready to defeat the devil at any point, because he is qualified with God's prescribed armor; because he has given diligence to make his calling and election sure.

Put on the whole armor of God,
Be on the alert for the right,
'Till Jesus shall call us up higher,
To that land where there is no night.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Paul's View of Spiritual Things.

"SO then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase."

The Apostle in this passage is trying to impress on our minds the great source of all things—the fountain from whence comes all light, and wisdom, and power, the store house from which comes the bread of life and the meat of salvation. That while Paul may plant, and Apollos water, it is God, over all, that gives the increase and garners the harvest.

We have our churches, the ministry, and our plans of work perfected and operated, yet over it all, and through all, it is God's invisible power in directing and consummating that brings the spiritual harvest.

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"

We are told that "if any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." Why? Because the Temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. We are Christ's, and Christ is God's.

Perhaps you may say your circumstances are such that you can not live a Christian life. But did you ever study the circumstances of Paul's life? It is a beautiful lesson for us. You remember he was imprisoned for preaching the gospel; he was put in a hired house in Rome, and dwelt there for two years, and received all that came to him. I don't suppose that he was allowed, during this whole time, to go beyond the threshold of the door. He was under a guard, that was detailed to watch him. Perhaps the poorest person in our country lives in a better place than the Apostle Paul did during those two years in Rome. In such circumstances of discomfort, he sends out this jubilant message, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

We have so many things to be thankful for. If we have bread and water for our food, God gave it to us. If we have raiment for

our bodies, God gave us that; and if we are saved, God gave the saving power and grace that lifts our souls to higher realms, and blots out of our lives envy and strife and makes us not faithless, but believing children. We are not following an uncertain Master, but we will receive our reward, according to our labor; for if we are children of the King, we are laborers together with God.

Was it Paul's circumstances in life that made him make this bold and open confession, or was it the Spirit of God in his soul? He had consecrated his life to the service of God, and I believe he often said to himself, "If it is God's will that I suffer these things, it is my pleasure to bear it."

Paul's life was a life of contest. Every real life is one that comes out of difficulties.

Paul said, "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

His life was one of purpose; he meant to do God's will, and Christ strengthened him.

We notice while Paul was standing before his accusers, pleading his own cause, the high priest commanded them that stood by to smite him on the mouth, and Paul's impatience got the better of him and he cried out: "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall; for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?"

Yes, God will smite them that fail to do His will. "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." Let us not seek to avenge our neighbor or our enemy, for there is one higher than we are, and His vengeance will be right.

Let us not grieve over any wrong our fellowman may do us, for everything will be made right. The time may seem long, but let us be patient, be trustful and faithful. We are pilgrims here and have no continuing city, but we seek one to come. We labor, working with our hands, being reviled we should bless, being persecuted we suffer it. Let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wicked-

ness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

We are not our own, therefore let us glorify God in our members, and in our spirits, which are God's.

Let us sow the seed in the morning,
The increase will surely come;
For of this we have the assurance,
From Him that reigns above.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Bear Ye One Another's Burdens, and so Fulfil the Law of Christ.

"AS we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."

If we see our brother or sister in a fault, or if we see some soul going astray, restore him or her in the spirit of meekness; for we know that the world is full of temptation, on the right hand and on the left.

Let us consider ourselves, lest we also be tempted. Let us guide the wayward, as much as is possible for us to do. Let us not be deceived, God is not mocked, for "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Let us sow to the spirit, and be careful that we do not sow to the flesh; for flesh and blood can not enter the Kingdom of God. "He that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

"Bear ye one another's burdens."

Let us be faithful, always abounding in the love of Christ. Let us be led by the Spirit of God; and the fruit of that Spirit is "Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law." With all these guiding us in our every day life, we can bear each other's burdens, and love our neighbor as ourselves. Let us live in the Spirit, then there shall be no cause to stumble.

Let us not be vain one toward another, nor envy one another, and Jesus will give unto us the spirit of wisdom, and our Mediator who is at the right hand of God will intercede for us, and with the Holy Spirit to help us, we can do all things. God the Father is rich in mercy and He will remember us with an everlasting love; even when we were dead in trespasses and in sin he hath quickened us into life. "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast."

We can't work our way to heaven by the laying on of hands; we can't receive the Holy Spirit by rising early in the morning and laboring late in the night. No, the grace of our crucified and risen Lord is not to be obtained in that way. It is a gift from God and not of man.

We were once without hope and without God in the world; but now in Christ Jesus we, who were afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. He shed His precious blood on Calvary that you and I, and all who will come unto Him by faith, might have everlasting life—might have our names written in the Lamb's book of life, where we may be safe from the enemy of our souls, the storms of life and snares of Satan.

Our bodies are earthly, they are only the dwelling place for the soul. When God speaks the word, they must return to mother earth, while the spirit will go back to God who gave it. Therefore strive to be ready when the summons comes. Let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

To bear one another's burdens is to comprehend the needs of those under trial; to have a heart of pity and a hand of relief for all their wants, trials and burdens; it is, moreover, to be in such relation to Christ and the Holy Spirit that the blessings of strength and wisdom and grace may come to our aid.

You will notice that the Apostle said, "I was made a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." This Apostle was not puffed up; he was willing to be called the least of the saints; willing to suffer persecution for Christ's sake, and with all long-suffering, he was patient and kind to his fellowman, under all circumstances. He prayed and preached the gospel to all that came in his reach.

Let us, therefore, be kind and forbearing to one another, forgiving one another, "Even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you," redeeming the time because the days are evil.

Let us be filled with the spirit and "put on the whole armor of God, that we may be able

to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

May we have the sweet assurance of the Apostle, who said, "for to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." He did not want to choose for himself either life or death; but said: "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better; nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you."

The Apostle felt that he could fold his hands across his breast and breathe out his life sweetly, without a doubt or a fear. He had trusted God, but the thought of his fellowman, and because of his needs, he was willing to labor on and to suffer persecution, and if the enemy had slain him, he had a beautiful home—"an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Is not this a beautiful thought, and ought we not to be willing to consecrate our lives to the service of our blessed Master, and say, "Thy will be done?" Willing to suffer even death for the will of Christ to be done in the earth.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Paul's Exhortation.

PAUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope."

This Apostle, in his letter to Timothy, gives us very encouraging news; he makes it clear to our minds that he speaks from experience and knowledge of Christ's power to save even to the uttermost all that will come unto God by Him. He said, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." He calls himself the chief of sinners, because he so bitterly persecuted the church of God.

How wonderful was the transformation of Paul's life. In God's word we are told how this same man, who called himself the chief of sinners, preached the gospel of the Son of God—counting his life nothing that he might be able to win sinners to Christ. His

spirit cried out in most pathetic tones, "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel."

He was imprisoned and beaten with many stripes, but that did not stop him from declaring the whole counsel of God.

Well how did this chief sinner, as he calls himself, do this? He obtained mercy and grace at the hands of God sufficient to cleanse him from all sin; and though his sins were many, and he had walked in forbidden paths and done many things contrary to the will of God, yet God's grace never let him go, and he gives Him the glory in these words: "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever." He thanks God, always, for His mercy and grace.

How strengthening and full of hope for us to know that this same grace and mercy is for all who believe in our Lord Jesus Christ. He still lives and reigns supreme, and is today, as in the days of the Apostle Paul, forgiving sins and lifting up the fallen, and though he has been drawing men and women to Him all these years, yet His power is not

exhausted, and He would have all the ends of the earth look unto Him and be saved.

I am so glad salvation is free for all. Let us be content with our lot in this life; for godliness with contentment is great gain, having the promise of the life that now is, and that which is to come. We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we will carry nothing out of it, but having food and raiment for our bodies, let us be content.

Paul tells us to "fight the good fight of faith," and the promise is that we shall inherit eternal life.

The Apostle James tells us to keep ourselves unspotted from the world. Let us strive to do this until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ—the King of kings and Lord of lords. Let us be rich in good works, not highminded, but may we trust in the living God, who so richly giveth all things to enjoy.

The Apostle Paul exhorts us to a greater faith in God, because of his personal experience. He says, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to

keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

The meaning of Paul is, I have been brought into the light—I have realized His power in my own soul—I have tested His promises under sore afflictions and trials, and I know for myself, and not another, that He will do what He says He will do.

Thank God for this kind of evidence. Yes, Jesus is able to keep every soul that submits his or her life to His care and keeping; and no one can pluck them out of His loving hands.

This Apostle suffered affliction that others, through his preaching, might be brought to a saving knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord, for if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him; if we suffer, we shall also reign with Him; if we deny Him, He also will deny us. The Lord knoweth them that are His, and if we put off the old man, if we are purged from our sins and made new creatures in Christ Jesus, we will be vessels unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

As God has imparted knowledge and wisdom unto you, do ye likewise to your fellowman who sits in darkness. Let us study the word of God, improve every opportunity to do good that we may show ourselves, as the Apostle said, "Approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

We are to shun profane and vain babblings, for they will increase unto more ungodliness, more skepticism and more unfruitfulness.

We should present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service. Give Him our hearts and serve Him in our every day lives.

Let us not be careless about our Father's business. Let us render unto Him the things that belong to Him—our talents, our time, our means, our opportunities.

Let me relate an incident: My brother was a great lover of music. When he heard clear, sweet music ring out on the air, as a rule, he joined in the song; but at this particular time I refer to, perhaps his heart was sad, or he might have been overwhelmed with joy,

as we sometimes are when our souls have feasted on the beautiful songs of Zion. This time, however, he sat in absolute silence; and his dear little son said to him (knowing his father's love for sweet music), "Papa, why don't you sing?"

This father and son have passed over the river and are resting under the shade of the trees, and I trust are to-day singing the glad, sweet music of salvation, with the spirit and with the understanding, in a world that shall never end.

And I say to all God's children, everywhere, "Why don't you sing?" Why don't you praise God with your voice? And if you are not a Christian, I ask why not?

Is it because some dear companion, or schoolmate, to whom you are bound with the strong ties of love—(which ties are almost eternal), is saying to you, "time enough yet?" Or is it because some one, who has professed to know Christ in the pardon of sin, has looked back, or is following Christ afar off?

I heard a young man say the other day, these words: "What has disgusted me with

the Christian religion, is the fact that people professing to be Christians are meaner than I am, and I don't pretend to be a Christian."

But let me say these earnest words: To man or woman, boy or girl, if there be such a one, who does not live up to his or her duty as a church member, it will not hurt you—it is their sin and not yours.

We should remember our individuality before God, surrender our hearts to Him, and trust Christ for life and salvation.

Don't let some one else keep you out of heaven because you think they are not what they ought to be. They can't render an account to God for you, nor answer for deeds done in your body. You, and you alone, can satisfy the demands of God in the last day.

False friends may hinder us in this life, if we will allow them to do so. They can start us down the hill, give us a shove and soon land us at the bottom, with a thousand regrets. What we should do is to learn to say, "No" to false friends and to the allurements of this world.

Our duty, in this old sinful world, is for us to do all we can in the name of Jesus. He has saved us with His own blood, suffered the just for the unjust, ascended on high, sat down at the right hand of God, and is interceding for the whole world that liveth in wickedness. His love and grace is unlimited and He will save to the uttermost all that will come unto God by Him.

Another thought: Some sweet day He will gather up His jewels; He will enter this low ground of sorrow, but not to be taken with cruel hands and nailed to the cross of shame and suffering; but He will come with might and power to greet the redeemed and carry them home to heaven; to the city of the New Jerusalem, that mansion He has prepared for the redeemed from the foundation of the world. Did He not say, "in my Father's house are many mansions?" And again, "I go to prepare a place for you."

O glorious thought! O blessed day! We won't have to return to this world of sin and sorrow, temptation and disappointment, but

wilt be reunited with the saints and loved ones gone on before.

When the victory is won,
And the crown is obtained,
When we see Him as He is,
With a harp of gold
And a tongue untold,
We shall praise Him evermore.

CHAPTER XXX.

The Christian's Rest to be Obtained by Faith.

"LET us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it."

We have had the gospel preached to us in its purity and its saving power, and yet, if we deny the faith and become unbelieving children and fail to enter into our rest, who will be to blame? Can we say in the day of danger and destruction, after the sacrifice that God has made for us to redeem our souls from sin, that Jesus is at fault? God forbid. If we trample God's mercies under our feet, harden our hearts, stiffen our necks and grieve the Holy Spirit, we may expect to fall under the condemnation of God.

It is by faith that we enter into our rest—the rest that remaineth for the people of God. "Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest,

lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. Jesus was tempted like you and I, yet without sin. Let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Did you ever study the life and religion of Cain and Abel?

Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground; and further on we notice they brought offerings unto the Lord, Cain bringing of the fruit of the ground, but Abel the firstlings of his flock and the fat thereof.

We are told that the Lord had respect unto Abel and his offering, but unto Cain and his offering He had not respect.

Why was Cain's offering rejected by the Lord? To me it is very plain; Cain's offering was not offered unto the Lord in faith.

Just so with you and I, if we, like Cain, bring our offerings unto the Lord just because others are doing so, we will be rejected. But if, like Abel, we come in faith, our offerings and petitions will be accepted.

Not only was Abel's offering accepted, but he obtained witness that he was righteous—that he was pleasing God in his sacrifices.

By faith Enoch was translated, that he should not see death. And why? Because he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please God.

Dear reader, would you not like to have the sweet assurance that Enoch had? That you please God, and that His approbation rests upon you?

What an awful thing it is to see in our courts the number of people who are called upon to stand before the Judge to receive their sentence; and what is more fearful, in the day of all days, when we shall be judged according to the deeds done in the body and

to receive our final doom to life everlasting or to eternal punishment.

Sometimes, when we are walking in forbidden paths we can almost feel the touch of His hand and hear His voice warning us of the dangerous paths our feet are treading and our lives are feeling.

My father had great dislike for some of the evils that draw such large crowds of people, especially operas, and always advised his children not to indulge in this kind of amusement. But when I was younger than I am now, I ventured to disobey his will, and decided to go in for one of the performances. After I had bought a ticket, and was just in the act of yielding to the moment of temptation, it appeared to me I could feel the hand of my dear father touching me and bidding me to beware of the danger that was before me, and, regardless of the money I had spent and the influence of present company, I walked away with a great sense of relief, that has helped me all along through life; not only to listen to the warnings of my earthly father, but to be on my guard and above all things,

to obey my Heavenly Father, who is watching all the steps of my pathway.

We notice so many things attained to by faith, even in our every day life. If we go to do a piece of work and haven't faith in ourselves, that work will be a failure; and unless we have faith in Jesus Christ, our life's work will be a failure, also.

> My faith looks now unto a Rock,
> That rock is Christ, a strong-hold, sure;
> His love is so great, no tongue can tell,
> 'Tis He who saves my soul from hell.

Let us look unto Him at all times, and under all circumstances of life, as the author and finisher of our faith.

CHAPTER XXXI.

The Perfection of Christ's Body.

BEING made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation, to all that obey Him.

There is no remission of sins without the shedding of blood—the blood of the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world; "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins."

No, it is not possible that the blood of the beasts of the field, or the fowls of the air, should atone for our sins, but Jesus Christ was made perfect through suffering.

It is true, also, that the body of Jesus Christ is the glory of salvation. Christ said to the Father long before this material world was made, "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me." The meaning of which is, that all offerings on the altars would not meet the demands of one soul dead in sin; but with the

human body given to Jesus Christ, every requirement of the Triune God shall be met, and every need of the soul, dead in sin, shall be supplied. Jesus came to earth that He might reveal the Father; He died on the cross to make the only atonement that will ever be accepted of the Godhead.

Many fathers and mothers would freely shed their heart's blood for their loved ones, who are standing aloof from the calls of God's grace and mercy, and who have never bowed the knee to the God of their salvation and have trodden under foot the warnings and entreaties of God's Holy Spirit. But fathers and mothers might shed the last drop of blood they have, drop by drop, still it would have no saving power. The blood of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world, is the only atonement for sin.

You remember that under the law the beautiful lamb was offered for a sacrifice to honor God. But once for all time, Jesus Christ was made the sacrifice for all men and women, and His righteousness is the end of the law to every one that believeth in Him.

Can we not say to-day, deep down in our hearts, that Jesus came to do the will of God, and grant repentance to all who will call upon His name?

Why should we not say, "I will arise and go to Jesus—to my Father's house, though I be in tatters and rags and my feet bare; I will go to Him, and have my feet shod with the gospel of peace and a new robe put on me, even the robe of righteousness." Then we can sing that grand old song:

"I will arise and go to Jesus."

Can we not believe that Jesus died for all?

Jesus not only died and rose again for our justification, but He became our Mediator for all time, saying, "Son, give me thine heart." He is pleading with the wayward every day to give a few days' work to His service.

Can we not draw near to this Saviour with a true heart, and in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water, and be saved from our sins?

He that despised Moses' law, died without mercy under two or three witnesses. "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"

God's word tells us, "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."

So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time, without sin unto salvation.

"Yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." No, when Jesus comes the second time, He will make a short work of it, neither will He tarry.

Did you ever stop to think how careful we are when we start on a journey? We put the house in order; the clothes for the little ones are all arranged where they can be easily found; then we pack our trunks. Some-

times, we even go so far as to lay every garment we expect to wear in the fitting place, so that we may be ready; may be on time. If you ever did this, you know how quickly you can be off; and long before the old clock strikes the hour of our departure, we are ready to go. Yes, ready to make the trip with a score of joyous anticipations dwelling in our hearts.

Then dear reader, what a beautiful foretaste we have here of the trip we all have to make, sooner or later, the trip from earth to heaven; the trip that is never to be marred by difficulties or disappointments. If we have made the necessary preparations in this life, the gospel train will not pull out and leave us; but if we are ready and waiting, there will be no sad partings and no tearful good byes, for we have put on the robe of righteousness and washed our garments in the blood of the Lamb. We shall watch and wait with patient hope for the message, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you."

Blessed are they whom the Lord, when He cometh, shall find ready and watching.

Accept the gift that Jesus gave
His life He gave, our souls to save;
Three days He rested in the tomb,
Then up He 'rose, His work resumed.

And now He sits at God's right hand,
Imploring mercy for sinful man,
With groans and moans, we can't describe,
O please do not this Christ deride.

He is a shepherd, kind and true,
And loves us as no other can do;
In His hand, He holds the key,
That locks us in eternity.

We are His heirs, if we but knew,
A rich inheritance is there for you.
And don't you hear the Master call,
In gentle tones, for one and all?

Then trust His grace, believe His word—
To you He'll give a rich reward.
Get in the straight and narrow way,
That leads to life and eternal day.

This life we live must have an end;
These mortal bodies return to dust;
But by and by, some time, somewhere,
We'll rise like Him, in whom we trust.

We'll rise to meet our Saviour, dear,
The Judgment day will then appear.
We'll hear the words, Depart or Come
To the Father's house, our happy home.

May not one hear the word "depart"
From Jesus' presence forever to dwell,
In flames and terrors, no tongue can tell,
With demons in a burning hell.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Directions Given to Titus.

PAUL said to Titus, "speak thou the things which become sound doctrine." He wanted him to speak the truth, as it was revealed in Jesus Christ, who is the way, the truth and the life.

To speak the truth, is to be loyal to the truth, and the truth will make us free. To speak the truth, under all the conditions of life, is to receive a reward, for the products of truth are but the reflections of God Himself.

When Paul said to Titus, "speak thou the things which become sound doctrine," he but said, be loyal to yourself and to Jesus Christ, and your reward shall be a good minister of the gospel—able to teach others to grow in grace and a knowledge of the truth, as it is revealed by Jesus Christ.

In Paul's charge to Titus, he makes out a clear case for the old, the young and the mid-

dle-aged. He gives many wholesome lessons as to how we should walk before the world.

He exhorts Titus to be a pattern of good works; living for the benefit of others, redeeming the time, because of the evil days in which he lived.

He appeals to the highest motive that can be offered to all men for a better and more consecrated service to our Lord and Master, that we may be an inspiration to the weak and doubting and a tower of strength to the faithful and loyal sons of our common Father.

What we are at the end of this life, we will be when the next begins. If we live righteously and godly in this present world, all will be well when we shall be called to the saint's everlasting rest; to the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the general assembly of those whose names are written in the book of life.

Let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. It is not for us to say the time or place that we shall reap, but the Good Shepherd, that careth for His sheep, will lead us beside the

still waters, and He will never leave us nor forsake us, for He has said so in His word.

He will lead us, but never leave us,
While on our pilgrimage here.
He will never forsake His children,
But is always ever near.

On and on we'll journey,
With Jesus as our guide
We know He is true and faithful,
In Him we can confide.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

David's Cause for Gratitude.

DAVID, in his hour of prayer and meditation, spake unto the Lord as follows: "O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me." So the Lord that searcheth the hearts of all men and women, knows our hearts and the intents thereof; knows whether they are good or evil.

When the sun that lights up this old world is shining in all its beauty, God sees us; and when it sinks in the west and darkness gathers around us, when neither sun, moon nor stars send forth their wanted light, Jesus the Saviour of the world, who sacrificed His life for all mankind, sees us and understands all our thoughts, words and deeds. The darkness hideth not from His allseeing eye, and the night shineth as the day. When we are in the most secret place, we are just as visible to His allseeing eye as if we were on the house top.

We can put on a Sunday face and deceive our pastor, and we can deceive our parents and our most intimate friends, but we have a problem before us to undertake to deceive the Saviour of the world; and David solved it when he confessed to the world, in his Song of Praise, and said, "thou knowest my down-sitting and mine uprising; thou understandest my thought afar off."

When we retire at night, after a wearisome day's work has been completed, and fail to bow the knee to Him who has kept us through the day, He knows it. If we walk in forbidden paths, though no human eye beholds and no human power may harm us, yet the great Jehovah is with us; His allseeing eye is upon us, to behold our secret sin and to condemn our wayward life. Let us bow our heads in shame and in repentance when we have disobeyed and gone astray, and with fervent hearts make confession to Him who sitteth upon the throne of His power watching and recording all we think, say or do, that we may escape His wrath in the day of His assignment.

David said, "there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether."

Is He not a God to fear as well as a God to love, who takes notice of all our steps in the most secret places of our lives?

Is He not the one to be in peace with us, when the happiness or misery of our souls is involved in our relation to Him?

We sometimes feel all alone, forlorn and forsaken, but we are not alone; for God is at home and abroad, on the land and on the sea. His knowledge unsurpassed, and His presence is ever near.

David confessed that God's knowledge was too wonderful for him to fathom, when he said, "it is high, I can not attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me and thy right hand shall hold me."

Is it not something worth while for us to consider His omniscience and His omnipotence, when we know that He is ever present to behold our crooked ways and to reward us according to the deeds done in the body.

Should we not strive to obey and love Him who seeth in the dark places, as well as in the light? He lingers near us on the land and on the sea—who guides us by His spirit and leads us by His strong arm. Should we not lean upon His mighty power that never fails us and never forsakes us?

David showed how sweet God's mercies were toward Him when he said, "How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand."

Think of His loving care for us. When we were dead in trespasses and in sin, He redeemed us with the precious blood of Christ, and sent His spirit to lead us in the way of all truth.

Let us say, as did the Psalmist David, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts, and see if

there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

Let us give Jesus free access to our hearts, that He may cleanse our whole being; and when He has searched us and tried us, we may say with David: "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name."

How precious are Thy thoughs, O Lord,
How precious is Thy saving grace.
How precious the blood, once spilt,
To save a lost and ruined race.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Esau and Jacob.

AND it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau, his eldest son, and said unto him, take thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me some venison."

What did Isaac want with this venison? Was he really hungry, as we sometimes are, after a day's labor, or a long drive or did he have some other motive than hunger?

Let us see. Notice that Isaac loved Esau, but Rebekah loved Jacob. Isaac said to Esau, "make me savoury meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee, before I die."

Did Esau, whom Isaac loved with ceaseless devotion, do as he was bidden to do? Or did he refuse to go? Or say yes, I will go, but did not go?

Does it not seem that when more than

gold or silver was to be considered that Esau would have gone at a high rate of speed after his father, who had loved him so dearly, had told him to go, in words that could not be misunderstood. and made haste to accomplish his mission when his father said, "I know not the day of my death."

We can picture in our minds this young man, as he equipped himself with bow and arrow, and started on his errand that he felt sure would bring him the blessing.

The result of this errand was that after Esau had made ready, had prepared the venison and made the savoury meat and returned, in his own mind he was as sure of the blessing in a few moments as if he had already received it. But another, in the meantime, had come in under false colors and had received the blessing.

Rebekah now proceeds to disguise Jacob. She put on him Esau's raiment, and upon his neck and hands she put the skins of kids, that Jacob might appear hairy; for you remember that Esau was a hairy man.

So you see that Satan comes to us dis-

guised in every conceivable way; he even transforms himself into an angel of light, that he may deceive those he would wreck and ruin. He robs us of not only earthly pleasures, but he robs us of our heavenly inheritance. Yes, Satan puts upon his hands the skin of the fleecy lamb, and his conversation to us sometimes is so flattering and so deceptive, that we say, "Surely this is the voice and hands of a friend."

Sometimes Satan so disguises himself and so completely hides his purposes, that the only remedy for our relief is to wrestle with God in prayer before we can break the chain that binds and say to him, "get thee hence." Only when we look to Jesus in faith and hope, are we able to shake off the shackles of sin and go on our way rejoicing.

Let us remember this story of Esau and Jacob; let us remember that we can't deceive our heavenly Father with goat skins, nor false raiment, as did Jacob his earthly father, for God sees us from afar off, and measures our thoughts and squares our actions in the conditions of this life.

Satan always comes the closest when we lend a listening ear to him, and there is no remedy for us but to say to him, as Jesus did, "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offense unto me."

The snares of Satan are so deceptive. Frequently he says to us what he said to the Master on the mountain, "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." Yes, all the pleasures of the world, the fame of riches, the lusts of the flesh, shall be thine if you will only be my disciple, says Satan.

Satan approaches us at the weakest point of defense, because he understands it will be much easier for us to yield at this point.

Some may rob us of our birthright here in this world, but thank God none can rob us of our inheritance that is "incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."

No one shall be able to rob the Lord Jesus Christ of His power; for when He ascended

on high He said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth;" and He will hold that power until the restitution of all things; until the last battle with sin has been fought and the last victory won.

A most precious thought comes to us that the wise Master Builder walks before us and takes care of us, and has arranged our inheritance so that neither father nor mother, brother nor sister, friend nor foe, can disinherit us or take from us the pearl of great price.

Esau said to his father, "Is not he rightly named Jacob? For he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright, and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing; hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?"

But the father said, "I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; and with corn and wine have I sustained him, and what shall I do now unto thee, my son?"

Here is the power demonstrated between an earthly father and our Heavenly Father.

The means and strength of a father, even to his children, can be exhausted; but the strength and means of our Heavenly Father is never exhausted, nor His purpose and His will concerning us can never be changed.

What a piteous cry the son here made when he said, "Hast thou but one blessing, my father? Bless me, even me also, O my father." We see the bitter tears of disappointment running down his cheeks, as he raises his tear-dimmed eyes to his father, while making his plea for help and for mercy.

No doubt this earthly father's heart was wrung and his anguish knew no bounds; but his blessings were exhausted and he could give no relief; but I want to say just here, the blessings of our Heavenly Father are without number, and if we ask we shall receive abundant blessings.

After Esau had begged so piteously for a blessing his father said, "Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth and of the dew of heaven from above; and by thy sword shalt thou live and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou

shalt have the dominion that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck."

And was Esau pleased with this blessing? No, he was wroth and said in his heart, "The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob."

You see what a great fire a little matter kindleth. Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him, and his anger was aroused and he pronounced vengeance against his only brother. He didn't stop to think, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." And again, "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Esau allowed his passion to get the better of him and would have brought himself into further trouble, had not the Lord intervened.

And Isaac in his old age,
While yet his eyes were dim,
Said Esau, make me savoury meat,
And joy fill my soul within.

Did Esau make the savoury meat?
Did Esau receive the blessing?
Yes, Esau made the savoury meat,
But Jacob received the blessing.

CHAPTER XXXV.

David's Confidence in God.

"IN thee, O Lord, do I put my trust." What a beautiful expression is this of the Psalmist—how confiding and so full of faith—how full of confidence in the promises of God did David feel when he wrote this expression. He didn't say I will trust my own strength, or my capacity in the hour of trouble or the hour of danger. David meant by this expression, if my God is for me, I shall not fear what man may do unto me.

Can we not say like the Psalmist, "Lead me and guide me, for thou art my strength, into thine hand I commit my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth."

Can any living man who walks the ways of this life say in his heart that he can trust his own strength, that he can defy his enemies

without putting his trust in God's truth? Can he say, though disease has not yet fastened its fangs upon him and fever has not yet scorched his brow, "I am independent of God's power or God's protection?"

Let us remember that we are not our own, and how soon we may hear from Him who has power and authority, "This night thy soul shall be required of thee."

Let us say in the depths of our hearts, at all times and under all circumstances, "In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust; for thy name's sake lead me and guide me."

Remember that when David knew he had to battle with an enemy, even a fierce enemy, he did not take upon his shoulder the musket or the rifle and go out to battle for his life; but he went to God, the Jehovah of all battles—the One in whom he had put his trust, and pleaded for mercy and grace when the enemy had sorely beset him until he confessed to the Lord his grief and waited with patience for his reward.

Though David's grief was great and tears often flowed down his cheeks, and sometimes

his faith would almost fail him for a time, and he compared himself to a dead man and a broken vessel as his enemies were chasing him, and not only chasing him, but threatening his life; in it all he turned to God with that sweet assurance of faith and said, "I trust in thee, O Lord—thou art my God, the rock of my salvation."

And if any man, woman, boy or girl can truthfully say, "Thou art my God, the rock of my salvation," he or she shall be saved.

Remember Abraham's faith and his submission to God's will when he was commanded to offer up Isaac on the altar of sacrifice. He did not seek to save the life of Isaac, but to do the will of God. Perfect submission to God's will is what is well-pleasing in His sight.

When God stayed the hand of Abraham and would not let him take the life of Isaac, He acknowledged the perfect submission of Abraham, and He honored him from then on through the ages, as the father of the faithful.

Abraham was so consecrated to God's will

that it was a pleasure to do anything he was bidden to do. He was also prepared to practice the Golden Rule, to do unto others as we would have them do unto us.

So we, if we would do as David and Abraham did, would be in a condition to drive back the dark shadows that gather around us and to be sustained in what seems to be a burden greater than we can bear; and the road now full of obstacles would soon be cleared away, and we could say with the Psalmist, "My times are in thy hand." Just lean on His everlasting arm, and be guided by His spirit.

Is it not a supreme blessing for us to be able to say that our times are ever in God's hands? In the hands of One who knows no defeat, and One who will never leave nor forsake us in all the burdens of life. If our times are in the hands of God we are sure of perfect peace and complete rest that can never come to us in any other way. We will be assured that the Lord is our Shepherd and we will not want for anything.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

The Result of Falsehood.

WE notice that Ananias, with Sapphira, his wife, sold a possession, but they sold it grudgingly. They were not honest with God; they were not honest with Peter; and what is more, they were not honest with themselves.

God loves a cheerful giver; He loves an honest gift; and if it is not an honest gift, it is none of His. He is too pure to be tempted.

On one occasion when earnest prayer had been made, the Holy Ghost came down in great power, "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul; neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common."

And not only this, but as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were

sold and laid them down at the Apostles' feet.

But Ananias and his wife, Sapphira, sold a possession and they kept back a part of the price, though they brought a certain part and laid it at the Apostles' feet.

Just here I want to say the thought that comes into my mind is—how can we expect to deceive God? We can deceive each other for a time, and we may deceive ourselves, but we can never deceive our God. He sees in the darkest hour of the night and probes the deepest recesses of our hearts.

Do you not believe that Christ's strength will supply us in all our needs and in all relations of life?

You remember that Paul said, "By the grace of God I am what I am;" and I say to you, it will be by the grace of God that we are saved, if saved at all. It was the grace of God that prompted those people to sell the things they possessed and give to those that were needy.

I say to one and all that there is in God's grace resource for every necessity, help for every burden, and direction in every trial.

Often we are burdened and we feel like our burdens and trials are greater than we can bear; but as I have said before, let us look to the blessed Saviour to roll away those burdens from our hearts and give us grace and strength for all the circumstances of life; remembering while we were yet sinners Christ died for us, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. If we will only trust Him, we can say like one of old, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want."

Let us keep our eyes on Christ and we will get such a vision of God's grace as will bring peace to our hearts; let us obey Him and whatsoever we do or say, may it be to the glory of God the Father. He that doeth His will shall know of the doctrine.

How important it is for all Christians to get all there is in the gospel for them—the peace, the joy, the power that the world knows nothing of—the peace that passeth all understanding.

Let us lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us and look to Jesus,

the author and finisher of our faith. Then we will find our paths, that seem to be filled with difficulties now, cleared of all hindrances, and lighted by Him who came to light "Every man that cometh into the world."

Peter, knowing that Satan had filled the hearts of Ananias and his wife to lie to the Holy Ghost, gave them the needed rebuke; but the rebuke was too much for a guilty conscience, and they both fell down and gave up the ghost, without offering an excuse or even a prayer to Almighty God.

Remember God's word says, "All liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone."

We notice here the awful fate of this man and woman going in the broad way of sin and death and the terrible consequences that followed their sin.

Let us do what God has commanded us to do, and His protection is sure.

Lord, take me now and make me
Just what Thou wouldst have me be.
Yes, fit me for Thy service,
And I'll give the praise to Thee.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

The Keeping of God's Saints.

GOD says He will keep the feet of His saints and the wicked shall be silent in darkness. They shall be like "A tree planted by the rivers of water, that bring forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." But the ungodly are not so, "But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away."

I often think of Hannah's promise to God, and her release on Samuel, her son; that she would lend him to the Lord all the days of his life—what faith and what confidence she had in her Lord, that He would take care of her son.

How well-pleasing it is to God for us to show our faith in Him; to recognize the fact that we should lend our dear little ones to God because He has lent them to us for only

a season and for a purpose—to brighten our homes and hearts, share our joys and sorrows.

Oh, that we could say as Hannah did, "There is none holy as the Lord, for there is none beside thee; neither is there any rock like our God." May we ever take shelter under this Rock in time of storm and in time of battle, and build upon this foundation that has been laid from the beginning of the world —the Rock that none can overthrow and the Rock of eternal ages for all mankind.

Remember the promise of the Lord: "He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness."

Let us look at the glorious triumph of the Christian and the humiliation of the wicked. Were we to be doomed to a home of darkness in this present world, how dreary this life would be to us. We could but cry out "Lord save, or I perish."

But when the sunlight of God's countenance is hid from our view forever, and the flames of a burning hell sweep over us, there

shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth that no tongue can tell and no pen describe.

If we will give our hearts to God, He will keep our feet from straying and our tongue from speaking guile. The Lord is our refuge and a present help in time of trouble. He will make good His words unto all men, and His protecting hand will be extended to all who call upon His name.

The Saviour said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls; for my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Take up the cross and follow after righteousness, casting our burdens upon the Lord and He will be with us in the sixth trial, and in the seventh one, He will not forsake us.

To undertake to carry our own burdens is the surest way to find ourselves crushed. Sure we will utterly fail if we attempt to meet the battles of life in our own strength, but if we go to God in prayer, we will gain the victory.

But some may say, "What is prayer?" The meaning of prayer is to acknowledge we need help beyond our own strength. We feel the presence and power of God when we come to the end of our own strength—"Man's extremity is God's opportunity."

Let us work each day in His vineyard,
Obey the Master's command;
Ever press onward and upward,
My friends, don't idly stand.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Christ's Interview With Nicodemus.

THERE was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This same man came to Jesus by night, and said unto Him, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him."

Jesus answered and said unto him, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he can not see the kingdom of God."

So we see there is no way to have a proper vision of the kingdom, unless we are born again, or born into the kingdom.

Again Jesus said to him, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God."

It is one thing to see the kingdom of God and it is another to enter into it. We get a proper view of the kingdom by the Spirit,

but can't get into it until we bring Christ's righteousness to pay the purchase price of it.

Before the question of being born again can be undertsood we must know what the Saviour meant when He said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." To be born of the flesh is to reproduce the characteristics of the flesh, which relate only to the flesh; but to be born of the Spirit is to reproduce the characteristics of the Spirit, which relate only to the Spirit. One is material and mortal; the other is spiritual and immortal.

To be born of the flesh is to produce death, but to be born of the Spirit is to produce life —one is to produce bondage, the other is to produce freedom.

Paul said, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

We notice further on that there was a woman in a certain city who, like Nicodemus, had not been born of the Spirit. This woman came to Jesus and stood at His feet weeping, and began washing His feet with her tears;

but she did not stop there, she kissed His feet and anointed them with ointment. We have no record that this woman spoke a word to Jesus, but her actions showed she wanted to know something more about Him.

But the same trouble arose then as it does now—that of fault-finding; while the reply of Jesus will be the same, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." These are the words of Jesus, and we are told that this woman's sins, though they were many, were forgiven, and He said to her, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace."

Remember when Jesus sent forth his twelve disciples to preach, He commanded them to go "To the lost sheep of the house of Israel," and does not this command apply to us?

Jesus not only healed the sin-sick souls of many, but He cured their bodies as well. He made the lame to walk, the blind to see and the deaf to hear. Wherever Jesus went, He did something for suffering humanity.

With such demonstrations of His love, wisdom and power, is it not strange that we should ever withhold Him as the fairest

among ten thousand and altogether lovely? Surely He that cometh from above, is above all.

Oh, how important it is that we be born again that we may see and understand and believe in and trust the Son of God for life and salvation.

As Christ taught Nicodemus the necessity of being born again, just so it applies to us to-day. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him."

To-day many heads are bowed in earnest prayer to God for that dear boy or girl, as the case may be, that he or she may realize the necessity of regeneration. "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved."

Free salvation is the plan,
  And He died once for all;
So you and I, though vile we be,
  May at last hear His call,

And in our weak, stammering way,
Confess what we have been
Through faith in Him, the Lord of lords,
Become a child of the King.

A child of the King, the Heavenly King.
Who is lovely and very fair;
Who intercedes for millions lost,
And bids them His mercies share.

Dear sinner, look to Jesus now,
Look by faith and ever live;
He stands ready to receive you,
His helping hand He'll give.

Through fiery trials He'll lead the way,
Your strength He will renew.
The bread of life He'll freely give,
And pilot you safely through.

Though Satan often tempts you,
And your faith oft-times grows dim;
But He'll guide you, day by day,
He'll increase your faith in Him.

In Him who gave His life for sin,
And shed His blood for all,
That we poor sinners, lost in sin,
Through faith in Him, should never fall.

Onward, onward make your way—
The battle ne'er give o'er,
'Till the victory is won, on brighter day,
And we reach the golden shore.

Where fond hearts will dwell in peace,
  Where goodbyes are never said;
Where sweet anthems never cease,
  And on God's love, the saints are fed.

No pain will reach that healthful shore,
  And no tears will bedim our eyes,
In that mansion He has prepared for us,
  In that land beyond the skies.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Christ and Zacchaeus.

AS Jesus passed through Jericho, there was a man there whose name was Zacchaeus, who was chief among the publicans, and he was rich.

This rich man was not like the rich man who said he would build larger barns and take his rest, but He wanted to see Jesus and to know who He was. It seemed that there were others anxious to see Jesus also.

We notice that Zacchaeus was little of stature, and because of the press, everyone eager to catch a glimpse of Jesus, he ran before the crowd and climbed up into a sycamore tree, for Jesus was to pass that way.

Do you remember what Jesus said when He saw this man's faith? Did He tell him to come down from the tree quickly that he might fall, as the branches were decayed and that his life was endangered? No, but He

looked up to him and said, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house."

A very important suggestion is made here in reference to Jesus abiding with us in our hearts and homes. He said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." And again He has promised to abide with us forever.

If we will let Jesus come into our hearts and lives, He will give us sunshine instead of shadows, light for darkness, peace for unrest and joy for sorrow. If we have been washed in the blood of the Lamb, we will desire Jesus in our hearts, to give us wisdom, strength and faith—to lead us by His spirit to a higher and a more consecrated life and make us more useful in His service.

The people murmured when they saw Jesus going to the house of Zacchaeus and said that he had gone to be the guest of a man who was a sinner. But has He not said in His word, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance?" It was a common practice of our blessed Master to eat with

publicans and sinners. Those who rejected Him made the charge that He mixed with wine bibbers, but Jesus knew how to go about His Father's business, for He said, "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick."

This man Zacchaeus not only entertained the Christ, but He believed on Him and became His disciple.

When I read the precious promises and glorious truths in God's word, I feel like laying down my pen and singing that grand old song:

> "Let me love thee, more and more,
> 'Till this fleeting, fleeting life is o'er;
> 'Till my soul is lost in love,
> In a brighter, brighter world above."

O, that we would get anxious to know Jesus, so anxious that we would go on the mountain peaks or on the house tops, that Jesus might pass by, and in passing, might overshadow us; that we might touch as it were the hem of His garment, through faith, and be made whole.

With Jesus watching o'er us,
  Then what have we to fear?
He's promised to protect us,
  So let's be of good cheer.

Just take Him at His word, my friends,
  He'll guide us safely on,
Until at last we are called to join
  That great Redeemed throng.

CHAPTER XL.

Christ Commendeth the Poor Widow.

AND He looked up and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury. And He saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites; and He said, "Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all."

This poor widow, you notice, cast in more than the rich men that had gold and silver at their command, because they had of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God, but she of her penury cast in all the living that she had.

This poor woman took God at His word, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." The food and raiment for our bodies will Jesus give us, and strength to provide, if we will only trust Him. Like this poor widow, take no thought for the mor-

row, what we shall eat or drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed.

We are taught in God's word that it is more blessed to give than to receive; and we are also taught if we give anything, much or little, it must be given cheerfully—not grudgingly; and it appears to me that this widow must have been a cheerful giver, and I believe she received an hundred fold, yes a thousand fold in return.

We have no account of this woman, whether she was a Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, or what denomination she was, but it is clear to my mind, from her deed of kindness, that she was a child of the King; that she was not a doubting widow, but she was a widow indeed—a widow that Christ Himself could recommend and feel proud of.

I believe that such deeds of kindness make our Heavenly Father rejoice like the innocent child at Christmas time, when the presents from father and mother are received—insignificant as they sometimes are, like the poor widow's mite; but when the little sleep-

ers awake from their dreams and find the little presents strowed around, here and there, they know of a truth that it was love that prompted such gifts; and it was love for Jesus that prompted this widow to cast in all her living. When we have the love of God in our hearts we can do all this poor widow did and perform deeds of kindness that will not only honor the blessed Master, but will continue to live when we are gone.

I believe this poor widow was full of what we call "Old Time Religion," and the poet says, "It makes us love everybody." Thank God for this Old Time Religion.

It is not always the great things that count most in the sight of God; and if we can not do great things that count most in this world, the smallest act of love will be accepted by Him who sees and understands the motives that prompt us to give, and He will reward us accordingly.

Let us do something for our Lord who has done so much for us. May we be encouraged by the action of this poor widow to surrender

ourselves and all that we have to His care and keeping.

Then on and on He'll lead us,
  Hand in hand we'll go,
Until at last we'll anchor,
  On that bright and happy shore;
Where rich and poor, high and low
  Will all together meet,
And Jesus, in His loving way,
  Will then His children greet.

Let us strive not for the riches of this world but may we be rich toward God, providing ourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth and where no moth nor rust doth corrupt.

Give something to our Lord,
  Who gave His life for all.
Give to the poor and needy,
  If at our door they call.

CHAPTER XLI.

God's Lordship Over the World

"THE earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein."

Did you ever notice in the Psalmist David's writings how he gives God all the praise and glory of all things material and spiritual? His life is a beautiful example for us to follow because it is a source of strength to all who will undertake to pattern after him.

David's walk in life was similar to that of all men. He did not always find his pathway smooth and covered with flowers; there were many and serious obstacles thrown in his way. Like ourselves, he had enemies, and they often pressed him sorely, on the right hand and on the left; they beset his way with many darts and many grievous burdens, but through prayer and the grace of God, who hath power to kill and make alive,—power to stay the hand of the enemy, he came out more than conqueror in the end.

In truth we can say as did David, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein; for He hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods."

David asked the question, "who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, or who shall stand in his holy place?" He also answered this great question for us in a few words, but let us study closely and see how much there is embodied in the answer. "He that hath clean hands and a pure heart." Nothing unclean can enter God's holy place. We must have clean hands and a pure heart, or we are none of His; and to do this, we must put aside all unrighteousness and follow where God leads us.

I would that all could say in all sincerity as did the Psalmist David, "The Lord is my light and my salvation. The Lord is the strength of my life."

What a precious thought and what a great privilege it is that we may call upon the Lord in whom there is no guile; and in God's own

wise way he has made it possible for us to call upon His name at any and all times.

When the sun is shining in all its splendor, or when the clouds gather thickly about us, and His listening ear is ready to catch even the faintest whisper or petition that we offer, let us put on the strength which God gives us and make our calling and election sure.

We are not heard for our much speaking; but if we go to Him simply, asking Him to teach us and guide us in the way and lead us in a plain path, He will strengthen our hearts and make open our pathway.

David did not attempt to fight the enemy with the sword, but with prayer, which is the weapon of our salvation.

Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, and whose sin is covered.

Let us say deep down in our hearts, Hear, O Lord, and have mercy upon me; be Thou my helper.

Be thou my helper, Lord,
O hear my humble prayer;
Forgive us all our sins, so vain,
And with our weakness bear.

CHAPTER XLII.

Job's Holiness.

I read of Job in the days of old,
Who blessed the Lord for saving His soul.
I also read of his religious care
Over his children, who were called very fair.

I read of his trouble in many a way,
That reminds me so much of people to-day;
If one goes to God for counsel and advice,
Satan will come too, with his cunning device.

All that Job had, was to Satan delivered
By the hand of the Lord, the maker and giver.
Though his household had all been slain,
And his grief was great, yet he did not complain.

We read of Job's holiness in time of trouble,
And how his enemies were only a bubble.
His mantle he rent, his head he shaved,
And worshiped the God that was able to save.

Again Satan came with the sons of God,
To present himself—does this seem odd?
The Lord gave him leave, Job to afflict,
But he didn't curse God, as Satan did predict.

From the sole of his foot to the crown of his head
He afflicted poor Job, then left him as dead;
And the wife of his bosom moaned the sad cry,
And asked poor Job to curse God and die.

We hear Job speak as one that was wise,
Although by Satan he had been chastised;
But with his pure life, not once did he sin,
But reproved all that came to try to tempt him.

Job's friends came to mourn and to weep,
For the appointment made they felt bound to keep.
They sat down with him on the bare ground,
For seven long days, to him they were bound.

Not a word was spoken to this man of old,
While there they sat upon the ground so cold.
I love to read of his patience, faith and love
In the Redeemer who sits on His throne above.

In agony he speaks these words true and kind;
"Though He slay me, yet will I trust in him,"
O faith divine!
A faith so strong, that will not fail,
Though all the powers of Satan assail.

While sorely afflicted, he saw by faith a home,
Where weary, heavy laden souls, ne'er will roam.
O sinner, will you look by faith and see
The loving Christ, who died for thee?

Though Job's face was foul with weeping,
And on his eyelids the shadow of death creeping;
In under tones we hear him sighing,
But on God's word, he was still relying.

O that we, like Job, may find our God,
And be submissive to His chastening rod.
In just a few more days, then we'll sojourn,
To a land from whence we'll never return.

CHAPTER XLIII.

The Godly Profess Their Confidence in God.

"UNTO thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens." Every Christian can readily voice David's words when he said, "Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens."

We can truthfully say, who can we lift up our eyes to, but unto Him that dwelleth in the heavens? There is none other able to apply the healing balm to our sin-sick souls, nor to deliver us from the power of sin and Satan.

Is it not a glorious thought that though our sins be as scarlet, He that dwelleth in the heavens can make them white as snow, if we will but lift up our eyes and hearts in prayer to Him that is able to save to the uttermost all who will come unto God by Him. It is a thought that thrills my soul

and fills my whole being with new life and renewed energy. On one occasion, when the disciples were in the ship in the midst of the sea, tossed with the waves, we have a beautiful illustration of Peter's confidence in God. These disciples saw in the distance some one walking on the water, and it frightened them and made them cry out for fear. They did not recognize Jesus, it being the fourth watch of the night. But soon their fears were dispelled, for they heard the voice of Jesus, speaking in that sweet and gentle tone, "Be of good cheer, it is I; be not afraid."

I fancy I can see Peter throwing up his hands and shouting for joy when he heard the Good Shepherd's voice. They were in the midst of the sea and thought, perhaps, all would be drowned and lost beneath the surging waves; but Jesus appeared just in time to rescue them.

Peter cried out, "Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water." And Peter heard this sweet invitation, "Come." Though the winds were contrary, Peter launched out upon the deep.

So I say to the poor, tempest-tossed sinner of to-day who knows not Jesus in the free pardon of sin, launch out, accept the invitation of our blessed Saviour when He says "Come." "The spirit and the bride say come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." We will find the outstretched arms of Jesus ready to receive us, and He will bring us in safely to the shores of salvation.

As the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress, so our eyes wait upon the Lord—for His word tells us, "They that wait upon the Lord, shall renew their strength." Yes, our Lord that dwells in the heavens, will abundantly bless those that love and fear Him.

We see in almost every chapter of the Psalms proof of David's faith in God; and when I read of those who are faithful and of those who put their trust in Him, I am more and more encouraged to obey Him and follow in His footsteps.

David said, "In my distress I cried unto the Lord, and he heard me." Yes, many can repeat the same words—He has heard my prayer and my suplications, and delivered my soul out of its troubles.

I can truthfully say, as did the Psalmist, "Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord; that walketh in his ways."

Unto thee lift I up mine eyes,
To my Redeemer in the skies,
That saved my soul from sin and death,
That I might praise Him with each breath.

Lord, help us, as we journey here,
From some dim eye to wipe a tear;
And point some soul to Him who dwells
In heaven, where joys, no tongue can tell.

Lord, help each poor, benighted soul
To thee their sins all to unfold;
That they may trust in Him who dwells
In heaven, and doeth all things well.

Lord, help us all this heaven to gain,
And trust the Lamb, for sinners slain;
As one by one, we are taken away,
May we be found in the narrow way.

CHAPTER XLIV.

Forgiveness.

THEN came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times?"

The Lord's answer was, "I say not unto thee, until seven times, but until seventy times seven."

"Seventy times seven"—that it four hundred and ninety times, and then as many times beyond four hundred and ninety times as the brother may sin and ask forgiveness; this is the meaning of our Saviour.

How it should make us shudder and tremble when we remember our weakness and our inhumanity to man; and our stubborn wills that so constantly rebel against God's will.

We often say, in order to excuse ourselves, "It is not human nature to do so and so,"

though it is a plain command of God that we should do the thing pointed out to us. But we must remember that we are to put off the old man with his deeds and follow the new man, because we are new creatures in Christ Jesus.

Let us look closely to this law of forgiveness. We frequently hear people say, "I am willing to forgive my brother, if he will come to me and ask me to forgive him." The real meaning of this is, "If he will come and humble himself before me, I will forgive him." This is far from the law of forgiveness.

Listen: "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." Remember the obligation is upon you to hunt up your brother and be reconciled to him, whether he comes to you or not. There is no other way to fulfill the law of forgiveness. "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

"Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants."

When this king had begun to reckon, one servant was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had nothing with which to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

I believe this man was an honest servant, for he was not excited to anger by the hard penalty of his lord, but he fell down and pleaded with him, saying, "Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all."

Think of that servant, his wife and children to be sold—he was to be separated from those he loved dearer than his own life. I fancy I can see him crouching down at the feet of his lord praying for more time and for more mercy and pity in his sad condition; and his lord was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt—yes, forgave him all.

What a beautiful lesson this teaches us. If this lord forgave his servant the debt because the servant humbled himself in prayer, so our Heavenly Father is much more willing to forgive us all our sins when we come to Him in an humble, child-like manner, asking for the desires of our hearts.

Did it ever occur to you that we do not have to study a lifetime to give our hearts to God? And that the unlearned, as well as the learned, can come to God and be saved in the same way? Jesus knows it all, better than we can tell Him; it is humbleness and willingness on our part to be led by His strong arm into the ways of salvation. We should be solely consecrated to His will, in all His commands. I can not help repeating from that dear old song:

"Take my life and let it be
Consecrated, Lord to thee."

But let us see how wicked this servant was after he was treated so well. He took one of his fellow servants and failed to remem-

ber the kind treatment he had received at the hands of his lord.

Lord help us, each one, to forgive,
That we, thy servants, may humbly live;
That we may feel God's cleansing power,
And be saved in each trying hour.

May Pentecostal showers swell
Our love to God, where'er we dwell;
And may our sins, though many they be,
Be washed in the blood shed for me.

CHAPTER XLV.

Samuel's Prayer for Israel.

THE Lord permitted the Philistines to sorely afflict Israel. He used them to chastise Israel for their waywardness and for their sins. Samuel was God's prophet and became a great mediator between Israel and her enemies.

The thought of the subject before us is the plea that Israel made for Samuel to pray for their deliverance from the Philistines. Samuel was not only Israel's prophet, but he was their interpreter and their intercessor with all their enemies. They were at this time sorely afflicted by the Philistines and they prayed for deliverance. Samuel stood, in a measure, to Israel like Jesus Christ stands to us—He is our Mediator and Intercessor.

So in the name and fear of God, if we have been washed in the blood of the Lamb, if we stand before God with clean hands and

a pure heart, we will cease not to cry unto our God to spare the unsaved and deliver them from the snare and power of Satan; for Satan comes to all in many deceptive ways and even represents himself as an angel of light, that he may deceive the very elect. His mission in the world is to deceive men and women. He started on his mission in the Garden of Eden and he has kept up his work from that day until now. He is represented as going up and down the earth seeking whom he may devour. He pours into our cups the wine of deceit and sends such temptations as will damn the souls of men and women.

Hear the cries of the Israelites and the prompt response of Samuel. Though the enemy was near, perhaps many in number, the power of Samuel overcame them. Samuel's God was with him, so one could chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight. I say to all that there is no other way given by which we can come out victorious except to accept Christ as our Saviour and follow His commands.

Samuel spoke to the house of Israel saying, "If ye do return unto the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord and serve him only; and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines."

And to-day there is no way by which we can be saved from the enemy of our souls except to get our hearts right with God and walk in the path our Saviour has pointed out for us to go. Serve the God who is able to deliver and able to rescue the perishing and we shall be blessed.

I believe that Samuel's heart was full of pity for these people for he said, "Gather all Israel to Mizpeh and I will pray for you unto the Lord." But as they assembled for prayer the enemy came, the lords of the Philistines gathered too, but the Lord of heaven and earth heard the prayers of Samuel. The Israelites, on hearing that the lords of the Philistines had assembled against them, were afraid and they again entreated Samuel to cry unto the Lord for them.

This scripture does not tell us how Samuel prayed—whether his prayer was long or short, but I am sure it was earnest and full of faith, for the enemy was smitten before Israel on that day.

If God is for us who can be against us? The winds and the waves obey our God and if we surrender all to His keeping, if we make our wants known to Him, He is as able to rescue us as He was the Israelites.

Can we not raise our Ebenezer and say, as did Samuel, the Lord has helped us. If we would do this, what a glorious time would follow—light would spring up and joy and gladness would reign supreme in our souls. Yes, the joys of salvation would be restored unto us and peace would fill our hearts. Let us, therefore, return unto the Lord and render unto Him a consecrated life.

Never in my life have I felt myself as powerless and dependent upon God as I have in the last three years; yet I have never enjoyed such blessings and felt the arm of the Lord around my weak and powerless frame as I have in these three years of my life;

and I can repeat the words of Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

Thank God I can truthfully say I know that Jesus reigns supreme in my heart; His love is the light of my life and His goodness and mercy is from everlasting to everlasting.

We are told that Samuel built an altar unto the Lord and when he was old he made his sons judges over Israel. But they did not please the people neither did they walk in the footsteps of their father, but turned aside after gain and perverted judgment.

But the people raised their voices against them and said, "Make us a king to judge us like all the nations."

When Samuel heard this he was displeased; yet he prayed unto the Lord and He heard his prayers and the Lord told Samuel to hearken to the voice of the people in all they said to him; for added He, "They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them."

And when we in our weak way try to point those about us to the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world and they

laugh us to scorn, saying "Go thy way this time, when I need you I will let you know," they are not rejecting you nor I, but they are rejecting the Saviour of the world; and if they reject Him, there will come a time when the Lord will reject them. He has said, "He that rejecteth me and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."

The people refused to obey Samuel notwithstanding when they were in trouble they came to him in great numbers; but after their prayers were heard and answered and they felt a sense of relief, they forgot their dependence on God and turned to other gods.

How often do we see people upon beds of affliction and their bodies racked with pain, turn their faces heavenward and say, "If Jesus will smite this disease that is preying upon me, the remainder of my life shall be given unto the Lord." But when we are better, we often forget our promise to the Great Physician and turn aside as did the Israelites.

The people in the days of Samuel wanted a king that would go out before them and fight their battles for them. And to-day we have presented to us a King that will go before us and fight our battles for us, if we will only put our trust in Him and look to Him as the author and finisher of our faith.

Let us rehearse all we have done in the past in the ears of the Lord and make new resolutions to be led by the Spirit of God. Let us wait upon the Lord and He will renew our strength and will give us a clean heart, as He did Saul in the days of long ago; and the King that shall reign over all nations will not hide Himself from us as did Saul when he was appointed King. When we cry unto Him, He will draw near.

Can we not accept this King as our King? Allow Him to fight our battles and accept the invitation to the table of the great King, where He Himself in all His beauty will serve us? This King is the King of peace and glory—the King of kings and Lord of lords. We must hide ourselves behind the cross and

glory in nothing save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

There is no earthly king or ruler that can give us admittance into the kingdom of heaven. It has pleased the Lord to make us His people, and we must fear Him with a godly fear and serve Him in spirit and in truth, considering what great things He has done for us.

I trust not one will get weary in well-doing and turn aside from the straight and narrow way because the time seems long, but press onward and upward to victory.

If we really are seeking the Lord or if we are trying to serve Him aright, we will not pause long on the threshold, but our cries to God, like the Israelites' cries to Samuel, will be numerous. Serving God is "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord." We must humble ourselves before God and He will show us what to do. He will open up the way before us and lead us in the paths of truth and right.

Cease not to cry each day
To God who rules above;
That He will take the wanderer,
Unto Himself, in love.

That He will save the erring ones,
Though sinful we may be;
That we may anchor safe at last,
Beyond the Crystal Sea.

His face I long to see;
His hand I long to hold;
A child of the King I shall ever be,
And share His love untold.

CHAPTER XLVI.

How to Attain Eternal Life.

AND, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?"

No doubt this young man was very much interested and really wanted to do something that the Master would have him do.

The Good Master, as he called Him, said to the young man, "Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, this is, God; but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments."

From what follows it seems that the young man did not quite understand and he said to Jesus, "Which?" And after Jesus had enumerated several of the commandments the young man said, "All these things have I kept from my youth up; what lack I yet?"

This rich young man showed openly that he was anxious and he continued to put his

questions about eternal life; and it seems to me that this man's persistence ought to encourage some of us in going to God often, asking for the blessings we most desire.

But there was still something lacking and Jesus said to him, "If thou wilt be perfect, go sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come and follow me." It took this to make the young man perfect. Notwithstanding his wealth I am quite willing to believe that he had lived creditably, but this alone does not reach up to eternal life.

Jesus said to this young man, "Come and follow me." He wanted this man to follow Him, as He does you and I—not like Peter did, afar off, but follow in His footsteps, administering to the sick, helping the poor, lifting up the fallen, trying in every way to sow the seed of forgiveness in every heart and life; giving, if it is all we have to give, a cup of cold water to those that are thirsty and care-worn. Just give it in Jesus' name and He will reward us, for He has said so in His word.

"If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor." But the young man didn't do this and he showed that he did not love his Lord with all his heart. It would seem that he was not nearly so good as he seemed to be at first for he was not willing to give up everything—his great possessions, for the sake of Christ; but let me say to you this is eternal life. Let us say in all sincerity, "Lord, I give up all for thee." And if we give up all for Christ, we get all.

Christ tested this young man's sincerity and he was found wanting in goodness. Let us break loose from the world and its pleasures and lay hold upon eternal life, for sooner or later death will come and dispossess us of all our earthly goods and usher us into eternity.

When the young man heard the saying of Jesus in reference to selling his possessions and giving to the poor, "He went away sorrowful" and there is no mention made that he ever came back.

May the Lord help us to do whatever He would have us do. May we not wander far

away from God; but may we, through prayer and faith, follow in the path that leads to the home above.

Ofttimes we feel it hard to give up the world and its pleasures, but let us not do as this rich young man did and go away into darkness and death; but if we will tell Christ that it is beyond our own strength to give up the world, He will help us do this and will take us unto Himself. To know Him is life eternal, and he only that hath the Son of God hath life.

To be accepted of Christ, we must put aside mere formality in religion and make our spirituality and consecration known, for every good and perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of light, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. If we ask in faith, we shall receive the things desired or asked for.

One scripture tells us, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill can not be hid." No, if we have the love of God in our souls we can't hide its light, nor do we

want to hide it, but we want to tell to sinners what a precious Saviour we have found.

I had a letter from a friend not long since and in closing she said, "Let me hear from you on and on." So I say, let us pray on and on that we may attain unto eternal life.

The young man we have had under consideration in this chapter never did a more manly thing than when he sought the way of eternal life; but he was not faithful unto the end and therefore went away sorrowful and lost all.

May we not turn from life away,
From the path of truth and right;
But may we all our fears allay
While walking in God's precious light.

CHAPTER XLVII.

Paul's Prayer for Israel.

PAUL said, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved."

The meaning of Paul no doubt is that all Israel might be saved through the Lord Jesus Christ, and not only Israel as a nation, but that all men, of every nation and kingdom, might learn of Jesus and through Him might find everlasting life.

We are in a land of Bibles, our nation is filled with churches and ministers who are able and efficient, but there is a lacking on the part of the individual in accepting Christ upon the terms of the gospel.

The Bible tells us, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Can we not believe that Christ is the Saviour of the world and confess Him with our

mouths? If we confess with our mouths the Lord Jesus and believe in our hearts that God has raised Him from the dead, the promise is, "We shall be saved."

It makes no difference where we are, or what our vocation in life is, or whether there is a revival in our midst, if we will go to Christ He will accept us and save us from our sins.

Esaias said to Israel, "All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people."

Perhaps some of our ministers could repeat the words of the Prophet when they stand before a gainsaying people, warning them to flee from the wrath to come, entreating them, with tears in their eyes and the word of God on their lips, to accept Jesus as their Saviour, yet men and women will say "Go thy way, at a more convenient season I will call for thee."

That convenient season may never come. Death is abroad in the land and he is no respecter of persons. He comes to the old and the young, the high and the low, and cuts

them down prepared or unprepared. What an awful thing it is for a living soul all stained with sin to pass into eternity. But it is not the will of the Father that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

I don't wonder that Paul wept over the condition of Israel. It is enough to soften the heart of a stone to think how many are lost in sin and are indifferent to their soul's salvation.

We should always be encouraged to pray, though we know not what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which can not be uttered.

While we are on praying grounds and pleading terms with Him who sits upon the throne, let us be filled with the Spirit and exercise a living faith that God would be merciful to a lost and ruined race. And though they be rebellious, let us pray that they may escape the storm of God's wrath and not cry for the rocks and mountains to fall on them to hide them from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne.

Paul said he was "Not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." I thank God for this gospel of power and for its triumph in the world and promise of overcoming the kingdoms of this world.

Paul, in another place, exhorts us to pray without ceasing and I believe he did, for when he was thrust into the inner prison he continued to sing and pray just as if nothing had happened, communing with God and relying upon His promises. Though we be cast into prison, let us trust God through all of our trials and persecutions and sing the songs of Zion and pray the prayer that Jesus did—"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Pray on, fight on, though storms arise,
And billows roll beneath,
The beckoning hand of Jesus Christ
To you in love will reach,
And lead you o'er the rugged way,
From paths of sin, to eternal day.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

The Rich and the Poor.

OUR Saviour very clearly defines our relationship with both the rich and the poor. We are not to despise a rich man because he is rich, nor to scorn a poor man because he is poor. However, the neglect of the poor is one of the common sins of this and all other ages. God's rebuke for the neglect of the poor is one of the severest He has ever given in His word.

"If there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment, and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing and say unto him, sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool," our Saviour tells us we would commit a great sin. We would be denounced as partial, high-minded and neglectful of our obligations to the

needy and helpless. The sparkling diamond, the gaudy vesture and the fascinating costume is not to be considered when we come to be followers of the Master. Jesus never considers the apparel, but looks upon the heart.

Has not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He has promised to them that love him?

The more I read God's word, the less I am surprised when it is said, "Narrow is the way, and few there be that find it."

We notice that God's word says if we offend in one point we are guilty of all. We can not serve God and mammon; we must be for God and God alone. We can not serve Him with our lips and allow our hearts to be far from Him. Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's, will always be God's decree for all men and for all time.

When we look around and see the power of God, we know of a truth He can thrust in the sickle of death into the wealthiest home in all this world; or He can claim for His

own the poorest man or woman that walks the earth.

Sometimes we look over the morning paper and see written in large letters such and such a one is claimed by death; and sometimes we say that man or woman, as the case may be, has heaped up gold and silver, has lived in luxury and so far as the natural eye can see this person's life has not been one of contest, but it has been one of ease. Strong, vigorous and apparently in the bloom of life, it is sad that such a one should be cut down and that another should reap his wealth and share in its glory. We should never again utter these words, but let us be careful of our lives and when the angel of death does come and takes the dear one from the family circle, may we be able to put our trust in the blessed Son of God, who died for the rich and poor alike, that He may give us comfort in dark days of sorrow.

Jesus knows our nature, He knows that life is just as sweet to the poor as it is to the rich. The feelings of the poor are just as easily wounded as are the rich. Let us ever

speak a kind word to the poor, and as God has prospered us, let us give of our means, for we are taught in God's word "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again." If we say, "Be ye warmed and fed" and give not those things needful to the body, do we not make a mock of our holy religion and dishonor the name of our blessed Master?

Let us ever demonstrate that Samaritan religion that our Master gave us, concerning the poor man who fell among thieves on his way from Jerusalem to Jericho.

We read in God's word "That faith without works is dead."

Being benevolent to the poor is on the same line as foreign missions. Sometimes we hear people say "I don't mean to put my money into the work of foreign missions," and when you ask them why, they will say, "Because in God's own good time He will send the gospel to the heathen." And sometimes I think we have reached the conclusion that God will administer to the poor in His own good time.

Some may say, "there's no use for me to take what I have earned and give it to the poor." But for every wound there is a balm. Read the Golden Rule, stop on your way and think—imagine the cold wind howling around them and no wood to build a fire, no bed to rest upon and no food in the house. In the midst of all this comes the healing balm, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you;" then you will have faith with works and can show to the world the doctrine that faith works with works, and by works was faith made perfect.

Did you ever go on a picnic with seventy-five or a hundred little tots that for months had been cooped up in a city with practically no outlet? They enjoy the trip, the good things to eat, the cool water, the beautiful scenery, and everything is a source of pleasure to them; and can you look into the faces of these happy children, though your step is slow and your voice feeble, without being happy too? A smile will light up your face and you will exclaim, "I am happy just to see you enjoy all."

Do you know our blessed Saviour feels just that way. The more we enjoy and the more we partake of what He has in store for us, the happier He is and brighter will be the smile that plays on His sunny face. Drink each day of God's blessings as He would have us do, and let it be known to the world that we have been with Jesus.

In our weakness sometimes we exclaim, "My burdens are greater than I can bear," but our loving Saviour bids us to cast all our burdens on Him who said, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Our cares and burdens He will bear,
His love and mercy we may share,
If we will but His voice obey
O come dear sinner, don't delay.

Our days are swiftly passing away,
And death may call us ere another day;
And with his sickle cut us down,
And lay our bodies beneath the ground.

From dust we came, to dust we return,
In silence we'll sleep within the tomb,
Until we hear the trumpet sound,
Awake, ye nations, under ground.

CHAPTER XLIX.

The Uncertainty of Life.

THE uncertainty of life is written upon the world's page; it shines upon the brightest day and seeks for room in the darkest hour. It leaves its mark in early morning and at the noonday hour; it comes unbidden and leaves its message at twilight's gate.

It marks the brow of the wrinkled face,
And stops to chill manhood's power.
It blights the bloom on the baby's face,
Nor quits its work on the ruined race.

"Man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down; he fleeth also as a shadow and continueth not." We know not the day nor the hour the summons may come to us—it may come as a thief in the night and find us unprepared to meet our God.

The uncertainty of life and the certainty

of death is as clearly written in the providences of God as are the fixed stars of the material universe. We know not what a day nor an hour may bring forth, therefore we shoud live in such a way as to be prepared to meet the summons when it comes.

"See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven."

The apostle tells us, "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss. Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?"

We are also told that whosoever will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

This passage of scripture brings to my mind a song I used to sing before sorrow filled my life—the words were these:

> "How sin and Satan did agree,
> To land my soul in misery."

I know that sin and Satan are still walking hand in hand and have long since agreed to

be partners and co-workers in the destruction of souls of men and women.

I sometimes greatly wonder why people are so filled with sin and Satan. Can we recall a single instance of a good deed Satan has ever done? Can we remember a single instance where men and women sowed to the flesh that did not reap corruption?

Satan comes to us as one having authority and power. He has oftentimes sought to map out our pathway as the only route we can travel without difficulties. We should ever watch him as a deceiver and never allow him to place his snares across our pathway nor blind us in his allurements and devices.

Let me relate an incident: A poor soldier lay wounded on the battlefield and the Chaplain, thinking his condition to be serious, said to him, "Would you like for me to read you something from the Bible?" But all the wounded man could answer was, "I am so thirsty, I would rather have a drink of water." Then when the Chaplain had quickly given him water, the soldier asked that something be placed under his head. Then the

Chaplain pulled off his overcoat and placed it under his head. Now said the soldier, "If I only had something over me, I am so cold." In a moment the Chaplain had taken off his dress coat to cover him and as he was doing so the dying man looked up into his face and said, "If there is anything in your Book which makes a man do for another what you have done for me, let me hear it."

And if Satan has ever done a good deed for you or your friends, let me hear it.

We have no record of the Chaplain's life, except his actions in this one case, but this deed will live on through ages as one guided by the Spirit of God; and when he enters the Golden Gate perhaps this soldier will be the first to greet him on the golden shore.

Let us do good unto all men as God shall open to us the door of opportunity. Speak not evil one of another, for there is one law giver who is able to save or to destroy.

We often say, "Tomorrow, or at some future time, I will do this or that." We know not what the morrow may bring forth. The great question to be put to each individual

heart is, "What is your life? Is not the life more than meat and the body than raiment?"

When we think of the uncertainty of life and the certainty of death, the solemn question should be—what of the soul, when the end shall come?

Let us listen to the gentle wooings of God's Holy Spirit and commit ourselves into the hands of Him who is able to keep that which we have committed unto Him against that day.

Let us be faithful followers of Jesus Christ, for all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man is as the flower of the field.

Sometimes we go to our rose bower, and on our favorite rose bush hangs the most beautiful flower our eyes ever beheld. To-morrow we go back and what greets our eyes? Nothing but the withered rose, fallen down upon the earth from whence it grew, unsightly and a useless wreck. Just so with mortal man. To-day we may be in the bloom of health—tomorrow a fallen and withered leaf cast upon the earth, a helpless corpse.

I once read of two boys who were discussing a trip that one boy knew would displease his father. Finally the other boy said, "Johnnie, I would go if I were you, your father need not know it." Johnnie answered most emphatically, "I can't go, for after I had been there, I could not look father in the face, but I can now." This boy gained a victory and deserved to wear a crown of glittering stars.

What we need in our day is boys who can look their fathers in the face and say with the deep consciousness of integrity, "Father, I did not go." We need boys in these modern days of dissipation to lay hold on the first commandment with promise, "Honor thy father and mother that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth."

Let us look our Heavenly Father in the face and say, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth."

Jesus will stand at the entrance,
To welcome His children in;
For the blood He shed on Calvary,
Has cleansed our souls from sin.

CHAPTER L.

Christ Preacheth Repentance.

THERE is no subject in God's word that has been emphasized more than that of Repentance, and it should receive our most profound consideration.

John the Baptist, whose mission was to make ready a people for the coming of Christ, who was to unfold His own Kingdom in the earth, said, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

When Jesus returned from His interview with the devil on the mountain, the first words that fell from His lips were, "Repent ye, and believe the gospel."

When Christ sent out the twelve and seventy disciples He said, "Go preach repentance for the remission of sins."

When the Master was giving heaven's view of the lost in earth He said, "Likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that re-

penteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance."

When Dives, in hell, was making an argument with Abraham why he should send Lazarus back to earth he said, "Nay, father Abraham, but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent."

So we see that John preached it, the Saviour taught it, He commanded His disciples to preach it, heaven recognized it and hell confessed to it; so the sum of all these facts makes repentance very important and there is no way to reach the kingdom of God without repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Again Jesus said, "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! Woe unto thee, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes."

Let us notice the parable of the fig tree. Though it was tall and stately and put forth its leaves in season, and occupied as much ground as any other tree, still it was barren.

We notice the owner of the fig tree came for three years, seeking fruit, but finding none, he ordered the man who cared for his vineyard to cut it down. But the dresser of the vineyard said, "Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it," and perhaps he intended to prune its branches and spray its roots, if necessary, and make it fruitful.

Just as the dresser of this vineyard made appeal for the barren fig tree, so Jesus is pleading with the Father to spare us a little longer until the Holy Spirit woos and wins us unto the Father.

"God works in mysterious ways,
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps on the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

Jesus was teaching on the Sabbath day and there was a woman which had an infirmity eighteen years and was bowed together and could in no wise lift up herself; but Jesus looked upon her with pity and said, "Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity," and he laid His hands on her and immediately she was made straight and glorified God.

Dear reader, do you not want Jesus' precious hands to be laid gently on your head—hands that bear the prints of the nails that pinned Him fast to the rugged cross—hands that have lifted up the fallen and helpless, and loose you from the bondage of sin and death that you, like this woman, can praise God?

Perhaps sin has bound you eighteen years, yet His grace is sufficient for you. If you are bound down with sin, the blood of Christ can cleanse you from all sin and iniquity and make you whiter than snow.

We notice in God's word that one said unto Jesus, "Lord, are there few that be saved?" Jesus' answer was: "Strive to enter in at the straight gate, for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."

Some one may say, "I thought that Christ came to save all men from their sins." So He did, but He has spared our lives and worked about our hearts with longsuffering and kindness, saying to us, "Son or daughter, give me thine heart," and yet we would not.

He has said in His word "My Spirit shall

not always strive with man" and when the Spirit has warned us sufficiently of the time when God in His mercy will cut us off and appoint us a place with the unbelievers if we do not repent of our sins, He will say "Depart from me into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

We may have said "At a more convenient season I will call for thee—when I have settled all my earthly interests I will seek the salvation of my soul;" but when this sentence is given, it is too late to come into the fold of God.

I trust that not one who reads this simple little volume will ever hear the word "Depart," but may all hear that blessed invitation, "Come ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Repent, believe and be saved is what the gospel demands and is the prayer of the author of this book.

Let us improve every moment of our time; let us love one another and our neighbor as ourselves. It is not hard to love our friends,

but sometimes it is so hard to love our enemies. They ofttimes lay upon us burdens grievous to be borne, and to love them we must be much in prayer and let the love of God rule in our hearts. May the Lord help us to pray without ceasing and exercise faith in his promises unto us.

Jesus preached repentance,
  Likewise the disciples, too;
Repent, repent the Saviour said,
  And is this not enough for you?

Repent, believe, become as a child
  Or you can not enter heaven;
For straight and narrow is the way,
  That leads from earth to heaven.

CHAPTER LI.

Jesus and the Net of Fishes.

LET us learn some lessons about the miraculous draught of fishes.

When Christ stood by the lake of Gennesaret, the people pressed upon Him to hear the word of God, and He entered into a ship and taught them.

He bade Simon launch out into the deep and let down his nets for a draught. Let us notice Simon's reply. He said, "Master, we have toiled all night, and have taken nothing; nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net;" and the result was a great multitude of fishes.

The disciples had toiled all night and were discouraged and had it not been for Jesus to lead them, they would doubtless have gone to their homes in despair.

So I would say to all discouraged disciples, launch out into the deep; make large calcula-

tions to do great things for God and if your first prayer and first efforts fail, try again and pray again and even the third time, if you fail to get the ear of the King. Don't be discouraged, but pray all night, if need be, and like Simon did try all night. If you fail in your closet go into some other secret place and He that seeth in secret will reward you openly.

What did Simon Peter do when he discovered the great draught of fishes? He fell down at Jesus' knees and cried, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

Let us notice what Jesus said to Peter, as he lay crouched down at his feet. He said, "Simon, fear not, from henceforth thou shalt catch men."

What a blessed promise to Peter for his faith in Christ and what an inspiration to Peter to attempt greater things at the command of the Master. He was to touch men's hearts and lead them to Christ for salvation.

We notice further on how this blessed promise made to Peter was verified, for under

the preaching of Peter, in one day, about three thousand souls were added to the church.

We are told that when they came to shore they forsook all and followed the Christ; and when we are saved by grace, we will forsake all and follow Christ.

Christ's promise to Peter was again fulfilled in the case of the healing of the palsy. When Peter healed this man of his disease, he did not make it appear that it was by his own power that he was enabled to arise and make his bed, but he said, "Jesus Christ maketh thee whole."

You remember when Peter entered into Cæsarea, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him. But Peter took him up saying, "Stand up; I myself also am a man."

Peter not only healed the sick but he raised the dead to life, bringing joy to many hearts.

There will be joy in heaven,
  Around the exalted throne;
And in that home, no loved one there,
  Would from God's presence roam.

CHAPTER LII.

The Ten Virgins.

THIS parable is one of the many used by our Saviour to unfold the kingdom of heaven. It has some striking features and beautiful figures set forth in the lesson.

"Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom."

Five of these were called wise and five were called foolish. The foolish virgins took their lamps, but took no oil with them; but the wise virgins were more thoughtful and took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

It seems that the five foolish virgins were very much like the disciples were on a different occasion when Jesus wanted them to watch with Him for one hour—they all slumbered and slept while the bridegroom tarried.

But after a while there was a cry made,

"Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." And at the last moment, the foolish virgins found they had no oil in their lamps and the night dark, but in the face of all this the bridegroom was coming. What could they do? They thought of borrowing from the five wise virgins; but then it was not a time to borrow, and they were told to go and buy for themselves.

We are told that while they went to buy the bridegroom came and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage and the door was shut.

Just so with you and I, if we slumber and sleep away the golden moments of opportunity in giving our hearts to God, until disease and death shall come, we will be like the foolish virgins, we can't borrow the oil of grace and we will be too late to meet the bridegroom—too late to be an honored guest of the King and too late for the open door.

There is not a true mother in this world but what would make any kind of a sacrifice for her dear boy or girl, but Jesus Christ is the only sacrifice for sin that God will accept

--the only door of salvation—the Mediator betwixt God and man and the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

May we not procrastinate until the last sermon is preached, the last argument of the spirit has failed and the last door is shut.

What an awful thing it is to lose the last chance of heaven and to be consigned, without any revocation, to a burning hell. Let us be ready, as were the wise virgins, that we may meet the bridegroom when he cometh to give honor and glory unto the King.

How often do we stop to consider God's promises to His children? Listen: "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be *like* Him; for we shall see Him as He is." Blessed thought! We shall see Jesus face to face—see Him as He is—not as He was, suffering and dying, but crowned with glory and honor at the right hand of the Father on high.

It seems to me this one promise is enough to encourage very man, woman, boy and girl to give their hearts to God—to walk close to

His side, to be led by His spirit and to one day be pure as He is pure.

Do you remember that Jesus fasted forty days and forty nights, that He might set us an example of suffering and sacrifice and be touched with the feeling of our infirmities?

God's greatest gift to us is Jesus Christ, and we should not let our affections center on any other being nor our hopes on any other power but His.

May His spirit fill our souls to overflowing, and His peace reign supreme in our hearts.

Abide with us, though shadows gather,
Thy hand, in love, can stay the cloud.
When o'er our souls the mist doth gather,
Our hearts, to thee, would cry aloud.

CHAPTER LIII.

The Keeping of God's Commandments.

DAVID said:

"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul."

"Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies; for they are ever with me."

"All thy commandments are faithful."

"I love thy commandments above gold, yea, above fine gold."

"Trouble and anguish have taken hold on me; yet thy commandments are my delights."

So we see how much importance is given the commandments in the Psalms of David.

Christ said to His disciples, "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

The question arises, how are we to keep God's commandments? Are we to undertake to keep them in our own name and in our own strength?

We can not keep the commandments except by God's Holy Spirit that dwells in our hearts; His Spirit bearing witness with our spirits that we are His children. Not by might, nor by power, but "By my Spirit," saith the Lord.

If we believe in God, His Spirit abideth in us and we will keep His commandments.

How precious are all the promises of Christ; but listen to this one: If we love Him and keep His commandments He will pray to the Father and He shall give us another Comforter, that he may abide with us forever.

He has prepared the way for us here and has gone to prepare a place for us in the Father's house on high, and has promised to come again and receive us unto Himself.

Is it not encouraging for us to press onward and upward that we may gain admittance into that mansion prepared for us? Its length nor breadth is not to be told and there is room for all who will come. We have an invitation to this mansion, why not accept it?

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Why should we not come to our Heav-

enly Father now, as the prodigal son did to his earthly father and confess our sins? Our Father stands with open arms to receive us. Our Heavenly Father will not kill the fatted calf, nor put shoes on our feet, nor a ring on our hand, as this earthly father did, but He will put upon us the robe of righteousness and instead of weeping, there will be rejoicing. Yes, there will be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth.

I say when we have believed on the blessed Son of God, we have the Spirit of God in our souls, and we will want to keep God's commandments.

When Jesus was talking with His disciples, personally, He told them many things, warning them of His departure and entreating them to be faithful in all things. "These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

Let us accept Christ as our Saviour and keep His commandments and we will be made to rejoice and angels will rejoice with us. Not only will the angels rejoice, but that mother, though she may be bent with the weight of many years; and that father, who, perhaps, has overreached his three score years and ten and is slowly going down the steeps of time, who have wafted our names on wings of prayer night and morning, they too will rejoice and their steps will be no longer feeble, but light on account of our sins being remitted.

It is not the amount of words we utter when we ask the forgiveness of our sins, but we can say as one of old, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and if this is said in faith, believing that Jesus is able and willing to forgive our sins, we will be like the publican; go down to our house justified in the sight of the Lord and our sins will be blotted out of remembrance and we will go on our way rejoicing and praising God and keeping His commandments. Love God and keep His

commandments and we shall receive innumerable blessings.

Let us keep God's commandments
As we journey here below.
Let us put our trust in Jesus,
And of His love we'll know.

CHAPTER LIV.

Faith Defined.

FIRST: Faith is defined as synonymous to doctrine. "Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

Second: Faith is defined as synonymous to regeneration. "Add to your faith virtue, knowledge," etc.

Third: Faith is defined as an element of the Christian's armor. "Above all, taking the shield of faith."

So we see faith has a very broad meaning, which shows its importance.

"The just shall live by faith," and "without faith it is impossible to please God."

"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

"He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him."

These passages of scripture and many more like them, indicate that faith and belief are the same.

Let us notice the history of Noah in connection with that of faith: When God warned Noah of the coming flood, if he had not feared God and had not believed in Him, what would have been his fate and the fate of his family?

It is not for me to say what would have been the fate of Noah had he not heeded God's warnings; but we learn from God's word that he lost no time, notwithstanding, so far as Noah could see, there was no perceptible danger. But that loving Father, who walks before us, who chooses our changes for us, maps out the way for us and takes upon his own shoulders our burdens and bears them for us, knew the future.

Poor Noah, like you and I, could not see far into the future; but the same hand that guided Noah is guiding us to-day amid all the changes, both seen and unseen to us, of a checkered and an uncertain life.

He comes in His own wise way and warns us of danger. When he says, "Son or daughter, give me thine heart," lose no time, for life is uncertain and death is sure and beyond this vale of tears there is no place of repentance or hope of salvation of the immortal soul. While life prolongs its precious light, we should come, unreservedly, and cast ourselves down at the Master's feet and say, "Here's my heart, Oh take and seal it, seal it for Thy courts above." Then we, like Noah, will be saved from the waters of destruction and housed in God's ark.

Did you ever picture in your mind this little family, after the ark had been built and God told Noah what to take into the ark and he had obeyed and placed everything in the ark according to God's directions, as they waited on God for the wonderful event that was soon to take place?

After awhile the rain came down in torrents and the ark began to rise with the surging waves—higher and higher it rose until the last spot of land had disappeared and only one vast expanse of water was in sight.

I have sometimes tried to picture in my mind the scenes that were taking place on the inside. I believe they were continually praising God for their deliverance, and the power and protection that He had given them from the raging storm, when the waters had covered the whole earth and no voice could be heard save Noah and his family. I believe this little band of eight souls were thanking God for His goodness and mercy to them in saving their lives from the watery grave.

Does not this little family give us a foretaste or insight to reunited families in heaven?

When the last battle has been fought and when time shall be no more—when Jesus bids us come and we sit down at the right hand of God and look around, as I believe Noah did, to see if all are on board and we behold the dear boys and girls we loved and prayed for here in this sinful world sitting also at the right hand of God the Father, O what joy will then be ours. The joy of Noah and his little family is not to be compared to the reunited families in heaven.

We understand Noah and his whole family were saved from death and a watery grave by the unfailing faith he had in the promises of God; and if we are saved from our sins, as sure as we live, it will be by an unfaltering faith in the blessed Son of God—saved because we look to Christ, who is the author and finisher of our faith.

The solemn question should be asked in our hearts, day by day, have I been washed in the blood of the Lamb and have I on the robe of righteousness, or am I drifting each day further and further from the only anchor that will save my soul in the coming day of assignment for all the world?

Some may be giving, no doubt, their best days and best service to Satan, who seeks every day, every hour and every moment to allure us from the straight and narrow way —to lead us into the kind of temptation that will destroy our peace of mind and finally land our souls in an everlasting hell, prepared for only the devil and his angels.

Should we not put our trust in God and

say, "I can but perish if I stay, I am resolved to try; for if I stay away, I shall forever die."

And again can we not say as the prodigal did, "I will arise and go to my Father." Go to Him and unbosom all to Him and whatsoever He bids us do, do it cheerfully. Walk no longer in forbidden paths, for the word tells us that the wages of sin is death.

Let us not despise "the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him; for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." Lift up the hands that hang down and the feeble knees and make straight paths for our feet. Follow peace with all men and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.

Let us serve God with reverence and a godly fear, for our God is a consuming fire; and when we have served Him aright, we can say, "The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

Here in this low ground of sorrow where persecutions, malice and strife are on the

right hand and on the left, we have no continuing city; but let us seek one to come. Let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name.

Faith is the stepping stone,
That leads to saving grace.

CHAPTER LV.

Death Bed Repentance.

NOW and then we hear people say, "I do not believe in death bed repentance," and so I say it is a late hour to settle such an important question. "Procrastination is the thief of time" and has sent millions of souls into eternity unprepared to meet the day of assignment.

This thought brings to my mind a time, several years ago, when a friend and neighbor came to my door and asked permission to use my telephone, saying that his wife and child were sick. After I had assured him that he was welcome to the use of the phone, he came in and grasped the receiver and in a moment called for the number wanted. He tried again and again, and at last succeeded in reaching the doctor he so much desired. When he had finished the conversation over the phone and had hung up the receiver, he

turned to me, with a radiant smile on his face, his eyes beaming with joy and said, "That pleases me." And with these words, he hurried away.

I knew in a moment that the doctor had assured him of the fact that he would come, and that the confidence he had in the doctor summoned made him believe that those he loved would soon be made well again; that the sweet songs would soon ring out from the lips of that faithful wife, and the merry prattle of his dear child would soon be heard in the home—then joy and gladness would fill all hearts again.

So I say to you, as did my friend and neighbor to me, "That pleases me," to hear the shouts of heaven-born souls, even at this hour; though truthfully we can say they have wasted many golden opportunities of doing good—opportunities that will never return again; and that he or she has been deprived of many rich blessings and what is more there is no time left to serve Him who has done so much for them—still, they can praise Him throughout eternity. Is it not enough even

now to strive to enter in at the straight and narrow way that leadeth unto life?

I call to mind an incident that happened many years ago, in the State of Alabama, which I relate, hoping to encourage those who have lived to a ripe old age and have not given their hearts to God. Don't give up the fight, trust and obey, though your form may be bent with the weight of many years and hoary be your hair and feeble your step, hope and trust in the promises of God and all will be well in the end.

The incident: There was a man living on Sand Mountain, near a relative of mine, who was a very religious man and he was deeply concerned about the salvation of his wife—so often praying that she might be brought to Christ. She was taken suddenly ill and he became alarmed about her. He saw that life was only a matter of a few hours, so he fell down on his knees and prayed earnestly that she might, even in this trying hour, trust in God and be saved. He spoke to her about her soul's welfare as long as she could speak; but there came an hour when she could not

speak, and for a moment this husband seemed to lose all hope. But he remembered God's power to save, and he felt he could not see his dear wife go into eternity without some testimony left behind that Christ had pardoned her sins. He again fell down on his knees and prayed, if possible more fervently than before that she might believe and trust in God, even in the very jaws of death; and though she could not speak, he asked God that she might show him some token, if only a smile on her dying face, that she had given her heart to God in this sad hour. I would have you know that his efforts and faith in God were not in vain, for as the shadow of death came over her pale face and as the faithful husband bent low to catch the faintest whisper, she looked up with a radiant smile on her face in recognition of his pleadings with God, and though not a word was spoken, she passed into eternity, no doubt a sinner saved by grace.

Is not this a beautiful lesson for those who have been born of God's spirit to be faithful, even unto death? The command is, "Be thou

faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

But dear sinner friend, don't misunderstand me—do not wait until this late hour to give your heart to God, but what I do mean is, don't give up the fight, but hold on to every chance that God in His mercy gives you, that you may find eternal life.

We often live beneath our privileges and rob ourselves of many of the blessings of life because we do not live near our blessed Saviour's feet. How often would the dark clouds be swept from our sky and the beautiful sunshine of His countenance light our pathway, if we would only dwell under the shadow of His protecting wings.

If we are followers of Jesus we are on the winning side, because He holds the scepter of power and victory. He can not know defeat and nothing can hinder Him on His mission of love and power.

Oh may the happy hour dawn
On those who wait, and wait so long,
To give their hearts to God, in love,
Who reigns in earth and heaven above.

When hoary hairs shall mark our age,
If then in sin, our time engage,
And feeble steps shall mark our way,
Lord, fit us for that awful day.

The day in which our sun shall set,
And find our lives without regret.
Oh may we pass, without a sigh,
To find a home in the cloudless sky.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock;"
Will you not now your heart's door unlock,
And bid the King of glory come in,
That you may find release from sin?

CHAPTER LVI.

Meditation.

Ofttimes I sit and read
From God's own word, just what I need.
It fills my soul with joy, not strife,
And fits me for the walks of life.

I find in it the story told,
Of healing balm for every soul;
I find in it the truth, the way,
That leads to life and eternal day.

I find in it some truths, so sweet,
And how he did His work complete;
How He warned the sinners then,
That He might save the souls of men.

How He saved the lives of eight,
And left all others to their fate.
How He sent the turtle dove,
And the leaf she brought told of love.

How He raised the dead to life,
And preached of joy, not of strife.
How He turned the water to wine,
And proved His mission to be divine.

How He blessed the children's days,
And proved His love, in a thousand ways.
How He gave His own dear life,
To save a world of sin and strife.

How He stayed the hand of Abraham,
And He Himself prepared a lamb;
He rescued Isaac from an awful death,
And gave him still, his vital breath.

How He spoke to lawyers bold,
And learned them lessons, that ne'er were told.
Lord, teach us to pray, we humbly ask,
That we may in Thy presence bask.

Oh how I love the story of old,
Yet it almost makes my blood run cold,
To think of the road the Saviour trod
While He, on earth, revealed our God.

How they platted the crown of thorns,
And how his person they did adorn;
They parted His raiment, for His vesture cast lots,
Those people were cruel, for Him they cared not.

A message came from Elijah of old,
Which revealed a love that ne'er was told;
In tones of mercy we hear him say,
What shall I do before I'm taken away.

We hear Elisha echoing, may it be—
Let thy spirit rest upon me.
Oh Father of heaven, Father of earth,
Give every sinner a happy, new birth.

How Elijah was caught up to glory,
And left behind his blessed story—
How the waters were soon divided,
And those who crossed were safely guided.

How God's man and woman too,
Left the path of the good and true,
And of the fruit they both did eat,
Which opened their eyes and made them retreat.

Are not we in God's garden too,
And called to dress it, through and through?
See Adam and Eve, as the serpent beguiled,
And the fate of a disobedient child.

Were I to tell you all I've read,
About this loving Saviour, of which I have said
Was balm to the soul, a light on our way,
It would take me, dear reader, many a long day.

CHAPTER LVII.

In Memoriam.

At the home of my childhood,
  At the dawn of a new day,
An angel came into father's room
  And bore his spirit away,
Up to the home of the Redeemed,
  Up to that mansion bright,
Where angels sing around the throne
  And where Jesus is the light.
In the family lot we laid him
  'Neath the stately oaks and flowers,
And with sad hearts we turned away
  To seek relief through God's own power.

On beautiful Myrtle Hill,
  Where the flowers are in bloom,
Lies peacefully my dear Florence,
  Asleep within the tomb.
To me she was dearer
  Than tongue or pen can tell;
But still I know that God is just
  And He doeth all things well.
To-day she stands with beckoning hands
  Inside the Pearly Gate,
And softly whispers, "Mother, Come,"
  Yet I linger here and wait.

While the snow and sleet were falling fast
And the wind in the forest howled,
My brother dear was called by death
And our pleadings disallowed.
Our home is sad and lonely,
One sweet voice we hear no more;
His useful life quickly ended,
He has just gone on before.
But I'll meet you one day, brother,
I'll meet you by and by;
A happy reunion awaits us
In that home beyond the sky.

In the far-off west with loved ones—
A husband and children four,
My sister Martha fell asleep
To wake on the Evergreen Shore.
She was a devoted sister,
Her life was noble and pure,
And on the other side she stands
To welcome me home, I'm sure.
Her useful life with longings ended—
All weary struggles past;
And her care worn frail body resting
'Neath the sweet spring flowers at last.

On bended knees, in her own home,
My dear niece, Sarah Pierce,
Gave up life's battle once for all
And returned to mother earth.

The early closing of her life
  Was like a beautiful earthly flower
That buds and blossoms in our yard
  And makes a lovely bower.
In comforting fancy I see her
  On the shores of eternal rest,
Where the faithful are rewarded
  On the Saviour's gracious breast.

At his home my nephew, Willie Simmons,
  On a cold December night
Yielded to death and crossed over
  While Jesus gave him light.
I miss his sunny presence,
  I miss his winning ways,
I miss the songs he used to sing
  To cheer me on my way.
But faith and hope I mingle
  With the thought that some future day
I'll meet again this loved one
  And my tears will be wiped away.

Near the homestead my niece, Sallie Davis,
  At the close of a summer day,
Answered death's call so willingly,
  So peacefully she passed away.
Her future was full of promise,
  Always light-hearted and gay,
Day after day she walked
  In the straight and narrow way.

She prayed that God might take her
  Instead of one she loved best,
That he might safely anchor
  His soul in the "Haven of Rest."

THE END.

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